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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



THESIS

**TIBET AND CHINA: HISTORY, INSURGENCY, AND
BEYOND**

by

Philip J. Barton

June 2003

Thesis Advisor:
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Anna Simons
David C. Tucker

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TIBET AND CHINA: HISTORY, INSURGENCY, AND BEYOND

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS

from the

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the history of insurgency in Tibet with an eye to the future. It offers background about the historical relations between Tibet and China in order to highlight why Tibet feels it is an independent country while China believes Tibet has always been an integral part of China. Next, the Tibetan insurgency against the Communist Chinese (1956-1974) is examined to determine reasons for its failure. The thesis then moves on to address Chinese measures taken to preclude a future Tibetan insurgency to include an analysis of those Chinese measures that have been successful, and to consider where conditions conducive to insurgency currently exist in Tibet. Finally, the conditions necessary for a successful future insurgency in Tibet are delineated.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
A.	THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.....	1
B.	GEOGRAPHY.....	1
C.	SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.....	3
D.	TIBETAN BUDDHISM.....	5
E.	THE PROCESS.....	6
II.	TIBETAN HISTORY AND SINO-TIBETAN RELATIONS.....	9
A.	TIBET'S BEGINNINGS.....	9
B.	THE AGE OF TIBETAN EMPIRE.....	10
C.	EMERGENCE OF A BUDDHIST STATE.....	11
D.	THE MONGOL EMPIRE.....	11
E.	THE MANCHU AND CHO-YON.....	12
F.	THE GURKHAS INVADE.....	14
G.	THE GREAT GAME.....	15
H.	MANCHU AGGRESSION.....	19
I.	INDEPENDENT TIBET?.....	21
J.	WORLD WAR II AND THE RISE OF THE COMMUNISTS.....	24
III.	INVASION AND INSURGENCY (1950-1959).....	27
A.	THE ONSLAUGHT.....	27
B.	THE 17-POINT AGREEMENT.....	29
C.	EARLY OCCUPATION.....	33
D.	SETTING THE STAGE FOR REFORM.....	34
E.	REFORMS.....	36
F.	REVOLT.....	38
G.	THE U.S. ENTERS THE FRAY.....	40
H.	CHUSHI GANGDRUK.....	41
I.	OPERATION ST CIRCUS.....	42
J.	CHINESE RETALIATION.....	45
K.	THE DALAI LAMA ENTERS EXILE.....	46
IV.	THE INSURGENCY CONTINUES: ZENITH AND COLLAPSE (1959-1974).....	49
A.	THE CHINESE RESPONSE.....	49
B.	THE UN ACTS.....	50
C.	THE US STEPS UP ITS EFFORT.....	53
D.	THE CHINESE CRACKDOWN.....	53
E.	ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN.....	56
F.	THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION: HOPE AND DISAPPOINTMENT.....	59
G.	REASONS FOR FAILURE.....	61
H.	MUSTANG OPERATIONS.....	63

I.	THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER WAR	67
J.	THE SPECIAL FRONTIER FORCE.....	70
K.	THE DEMISE OF THE RESISTANCE.....	71
L.	REASONS FOR THE FAILURE AT MUSTANG.....	76
V.	CONSOLIDATION	81
A.	BEGINNING STAGES	81
B.	THE UN'S PARTING SHOT	81
C.	THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION	83
D.	CHINA UNDER DENG XIAOPING	86
E.	THE 1987 TIBETAN RIOTS.....	89
F.	THE STRASBOURG PROPOSAL.....	91
G.	MARTIAL LAW AND BEYOND.....	92
VI.	TIBET IN THE 21 ST CENTURY	97
A.	RECENT EVENTS.....	97
B.	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES	108
C.	INTERNAL RESISTANCE.....	119
D.	EXTERNAL RESISTANCE.....	123
VII.	CONCLUSION	127
A.	THE BIG PICTURE.....	127
B.	FAILURE ON MANY LEVELS	133
C.	HOW CHINA WON.....	140
D.	SCENARIOS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCY.....	142
	APPENDIX. MAPS.....	145
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	149
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	155

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1.	Tibet's Location in the World.....	145
Map 2.	Regions of Tibet.....	146
Map 3.	Nepal.	146
Map 4.	Roads and Proposed Railroad.	147

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

Tibet has been an enigma to the world for centuries, and with the desire to gain knowledge of this mysterious land has come the repeated desire to conquer it. Throughout the years, Tibet has always tried to maintain its independence by claiming to be a sovereign nation, while China has steadfastly proclaimed that Tibet belongs to it. Beyond just this difference of opinion between China and Tibet, there has been an ongoing struggle among the great powers of any given era to pierce the isolation of Tibet, and likewise incorporate it. The tussle over Tibet can be said to have begun with China in the eighth century, involved Russia and Great Britain during the Great Game of the 19th and early 20th centuries, continued throughout World War II, and reached its crescendo with the Communist Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950.

This last Chinese invasion spurred the United States to aid Tibetan guerrillas in order to stop the spread of communism, while the Chinese attempted to reclaim what they considered to be Chinese territory. Once the United States identified the Soviet Union, and not China as the larger threat, the United States abandoned the Tibetans in a bid to improve relations with China against a common enemy: the Soviet Union.

Many years later, which means not so long ago, the world witnessed the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of China as a near-peer competitor of the United States. What significance might these two events now hold for U.S. interests in Tibet? And what might we expect in the future? Before attempting to address these issues, it is first necessary to provide some background so that a firm foundation can be established in order to understand Tibet's complex history and the predicament it not only faces, but may yet pose for the U.S. This foundation, on which this thesis builds, consists of Tibetan geography, social organization, and Tibetan Buddhism.

B. GEOGRAPHY

Traditional Tibet comprises approximately 500,000 square miles, and occupies a unique location in central Asia. It is bordered to the north and east by China, by India to the south and west, and by Nepal to the southwest. Yet, despite its location between the

two most populous countries in the world, for much of its history Tibet remained isolated. This isolation can be attributed to the natural barriers that make access quite challenging even under the best conditions. Tibet:

is bounded on the north by the towering Kunlun Mountains separating it from the Chinese province of Xinjiang, and in the west by the mighty Karakorum range on the border with Kashmir. The majestic Himalayas form a natural boundary with India in the south. Only to the east is there a gap to the outside world. (Knaus, 1999, p. 2)

However, even where no mountain range exists, access is still hampered by other obstacles. In the east there are “deep steep-sided chasms. These run parallel and close together, stretching for hundreds of kilometres [sic] into the area and cutting Tibet’s main settlements off from the east” (Kolb, 1971, p. 363). Additionally, even though there are a few passes through the surrounding mountain ranges, harsh climactic conditions render them impassable for most of the year.

Then, once beyond these formidable barriers, one reaches Tibet itself. The area that was traditionally regarded as Tibet now consists of three main regions: Amdo, Kham, and the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Though Tibetans consider Tibet to consist of all three regions, China only recognizes the TAR as Tibet.* Also, within the boundaries of Tibet, one finds the source for some of Asia’s greatest rivers including the Yangtze, the Mekong, the Salween, and the Irrawaddy.

Tibet’s topography is quite spectacular. Occupying an average elevation of 14,000 feet above sea level, Tibet towers above its neighbors, and has justly earned its nickname of the roof of the world. The “roof” is made up of the largest plateau in the world, known as the Chang Tang, which constitutes the bulk of Tibet. The Chang Tang also serves as a barrier to those wishing to penetrate interior Tibet for it consists of:

vast stretches of open plains interspersed with large mountain ranges. Much of this area lies at altitudes of 16,000 feet and above, making it inhospitable to humans and able to support only sparse vegetation. It is largely uninhabited, except for hardy Tibetan nomads. (Powers, 1995, p. 120)

* Whenever I make reference to Tibet it is in regard to traditional Tibet unless the TAR is specifically mentioned.

Not surprisingly, since agriculture could not be sustained at such an extreme elevation, another means of subsistence had to be found. Thus, the nomads of the plateau adopted animal husbandry. Their herds normally consist of sheep, goats, cattle, yaks, and horses, and nomads are able to maintain this livelihood by moving their animals, at different times of the year, to wherever the grazing is best.

Since the plateau is so inhospitable, the majority of Tibet's population settled in the great valley of southern Tibet which "is occupied by the upper Indus River in the west and the upper Brahmaputra in the east" (Shabad, 1956, p. 262). Here, the average elevation is only 12,000 feet, and this is where the major population centers of Lhasa (Tibet's capital), Shigatse, and Gyantse can be found. Also, in this zone, agriculture is sustainable. "The lower reaches are capable of producing a wide range of agricultural products, including barley, wheat, black peas, beans, mustard, hemp, potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, garlic, celery, and tomatoes" (Powers, p. 120). Lastly, as on the northern plateau, animal husbandry became a means of subsistence for some inhabitants of the valley. Due, then, to this confluence of animal husbandry and agriculture, the southern region became the country's main economic zone. Because of continued isolation from the rest of the world, the southern region of Tibet never developed in a manner similar to the great population centers of the West, though it did develop into Tibet's population center.

C. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Tibet's population can be divided into two distinct segments: nomads and those who are sedentary. The nomads, scattered throughout Tibet, constitute the majority of the Tibetan population, and live in clans led by chiefs. Therefore, it is to that chief and clan that individual Tibetans owe their loyalty. Accordingly, few nomads have ever had a sense of being Tibetan. One is either a Khampa, a Golok, an Amdowa, or one of any number of clans. Even with the transitory nature of this population, clans remained tightly-knit.

One area where rules were particularly stringent pertained to the nomads' livelihood: animal husbandry. The clans "had strict rules governing when, where and for how long herds could graze—and nomads who violated the rules could be fined" (Kuhn, 2002a). At first glance, one might think precise guidance a bit strange for a nomadic

group, but rules covering grazing practices are to be expected given Tibet's scarcity of grazing land. If rules were not enforced, or did not exist at all, there is the very real possibility that overgrazing by one herder could jeopardize the security of the entire clan. In other words, these rules are necessary for survival, and subsequently have long been accepted by clan members.

At the same time, whenever outsiders, such as the Lhasan government, have tried to impose rules on the nomads, these have been ignored because the rules originated outside the local hierarchy and only served the interests of the central government. In other words, clans have long recognized that they would not receive any benefit from following the decrees of a distant government and, therefore, they have seen no reason to obey. Consequently, the various clans generally refused to comply with government edicts. When confronted with this opposition, there was little the central government could then do because it lacked the means to enforce its directives. Thus, over Tibet's long history nomads developed a reputation for being fiercely independent, and this is a reputation that lingers.

Prior to China's 20th century invasion, the sedentary portion of Tibet's population, was mostly concentrated around the larger cities, that themselves could be found in a relatively small geographical area. This population consisted of lamas (monks) who ran and attended the monasteries, a few landowning aristocrats, a large number of serfs who worked the land for the monasteries and aristocrats, and a few business owners and artisans. This sedentary portion of Tibetan society was tied into a rigidly hierarchical feudal structure. "Tibet was composed of clearly defined strata, with the religious elite and aristocracy at the top and the warrior and merchant classes well below" (Conboy & Morrison, 2002, p. 53). Of course, lowest on this social scale were the serfs, who made up the vast majority of the sedentary population. These, then, became the people the central government was able to most successfully control, especially in Lhasa, Shigatse, Gyantse, and their environs.

One could thus generalize and say that, although Tibetans near the capital were largely controlled by the central government, the farther one went from Lhasa, the less control the government exercised. For centuries, essentially, nomads governed

themselves, and Tibet was composed of two distinct structures. The majority of the population, the nomads, existed under a clan system run by chiefs while the smaller sedentary component of the population lived within an oppressive feudal system controlled by the lamas and the aristocracy. Understanding these differences is critical when it comes to making sense of the difficulties Tibet encountered once the Communist Chinese invaded.

As pointed out, although limited government structure did nothing to bind Tibetans together, there is one aspect of Tibetan life that does unite Tibetans no matter where they are located. This driving force, which makes a Tibetan who he is and around which all of Tibetan society is centered, can be found in religion and, more specifically, in *Tibetan* Buddhism.

D. TIBETAN BUDDHISM

As important as Buddhism is to understanding Tibetans, it is interesting to note that Buddhism is not native to Tibet. In fact, Buddhism was imported to Tibet, and replaced the native religion, Bon, early in Tibet's history (adoption of Buddhism in Tibet will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter II). However, once introduced, Buddhism quickly took root, and has been identified with Tibet ever since. Therefore, to understand Tibetans, it is necessary to explain a few of Tibetan Buddhism's basic tenets.

To begin with, one must be aware that Buddhists see Buddhism as more than just a religion. For them, it is a way of life. "Tibetan Buddhism is a way of experiencing the world...The Buddha did not teach a theory describing the universe; he taught a method—a prescription—for how to live in it" (Novick, 1999, p. 9). Therefore, Tibetans make all decisions after determining whether a proposed action complies with their Buddhist beliefs. Consequently, even if a particular action might benefit an individual or group and seems the prudent course of action, it will not be pursued if it is seen to conflict with the way Buddhism says life should be led. As we shall later see, the desire to strictly follow Buddhist teachings will play an important role in explaining how Tibet's peculiar relationship with China develops, and will also explain Tibetan delays in taking up arms against the Communist Chinese invader in the 1950s.

Another interesting aspect of Tibetan Buddhism is that it differs from other forms of Buddhism. “It allows for a person to get completely involved in human affairs—in family, politics, art, and business—while fostering a fundamental awareness that it is all cosmic theater” (p. 10). In other words, just because one wishes to live life according to the teachings of Buddhism does not mean one cannot play a meaningful role in society. This provision is key to understanding how Tibet is eventually able to become a Buddhist state. Furthermore, as implied in the second portion of the previous quote, earthly matters are of no significance. Since Buddhism is based on impermanence, it is only how one acts while we are on this earth that is truly important because actions will determine whether or not one can eventually become a Buddha. For, in the end, the goal of all who follow Buddhism is to some day become a Buddha, at which time an individual will have “removed all obstacles and obscurations to Liberation and Knowledge” (p. 194).

Finally, it is important to note that Buddhists believe in love and compassion for all living creatures and, by using love and compassion, can fulfill Buddhism’s purpose: to relieve all suffering. Anything, therefore, that causes suffering to other living beings is to be avoided. Obviously, as will be discovered, such strong beliefs towards life are bound to cause problems for anyone seeking to wage an insurgency.

E. THE PROCESS

Having offered this cursory analysis of Tibet’s geography, social organization, and Tibetan Buddhism, let me now describe what this thesis will set out to do. I will begin, in Chapter II, with background information that will make it easier for the reader to understand why China invaded Tibet in 1950. Specifically, Tibetan history and Tibet’s changing relationship with China will be examined. My aim is to convey why Tibet comes to regard itself an independent country and why China maintains that Tibet is, and always has been, a part of China. To accomplish this task, I will go back to the earliest known history of Tibet in the seventh century, explore Tibet’s age of empire, the eventual emergence of a Buddhist state, and the unique Cho-Yon relationship which was first established with the Mongol empire. Afterwards, the era known as The Great Game, when Great Britain and Russia vied to see who could penetrate Tibet first and make her an ally, will be addressed. At this point, one will see an attempt on the part of Great Britain to have Tibet recognized as an independent country just prior to World War II,

when these efforts were then dropped. Finally, the formation of Communist China will be briefly explained, and will set the stage for the ensuing invasion of Tibet.

Chapter III concentrates on the Chinese invasion of 1950, Tibet's acceptance of the 17-Point Agreement (a document which legally made Tibet a part of China), and the beginning of Chinese reforms in Tibet. Here is when we see glimmers of Tibetan resistance as Chinese reforms become increasingly oppressive, and the eventual formation of a national Tibetan resistance movement. At the same time, the United States will begin to express some interest in what is happening in Tibet, and this interest will culminate with the U.S. decision to covertly supply Tibet with arms, ammunition, and other supplies, as well as train Tibetan guerrillas in the United States. The third chapter will conclude in 1959 when the Dalai Lama realizes he can no longer help his people by remaining in Tibet, thus his difficult decision to enter exile in India.

Chapter IV continues with the insurgency against the Chinese, and follows it until its final collapse in 1974. The chapter first addresses the measures taken by China after the Dalai Lama's departure from Tibet. It then examines UN responses to what was happening in Tibet, and the growing role the U.S. played in the insurgency. Next, the failure of the first half of the insurgency (that portion staged from within Tibet) is analyzed, and the formation of a guerrilla base in the Mustang region of Nepal and subsequent operations from that location are examined in depth. Afterwards, the Sino-Indian Border War of 1962 and its effects on the insurgency will be covered. Following the Border War, I will trace the deterioration of U.S. support for the guerrillas, and the eventual abandonment of the resistance program. Finally, the causes for the failure at Mustang will be examined.

Chapter V concentrates on methods China employed to consolidate its control over Tibet after the end of the insurgency. Specifically, this discussion focuses on four areas that have received the most resources and attention from the Chinese: Tibet's infrastructure, economy, religion, and its potential colonization by the Chinese. This chapter not only explains what measures were initially taken in these four areas, it also describes how Chinese policy in each area has changed over time.

Chapter VI continues where Chapter V leaves off by bringing the reader up to date with the most recent events that have occurred in Tibet in these four areas. I then move on to examine opportunities that have become constraints and constraints that have become opportunities, as a result of Chinese measures and pressures. This chapter also outlines a number of opportunities that have arisen in Tibet that are not a consequence of Chinese actions. I then conclude with an assessment of ongoing internal and external resistance measures used to express dissatisfaction with Chinese rule in Tibet and the impact, both locally and in the international community, of these resistance efforts.

Chapter VII is the conclusion, and will sum up what this investigation of Tibet's insurgency and its aftermath has revealed. Also, I consider whether or not current conditions in Tibet are conducive for another insurgency, and then propose conditions that I believe would be necessary for any future insurgency to succeed. I will offer two scenarios. The first depends on a widespread breakdown in internal Chinese rule that would cause China to concentrate on interior regions at the expense of outlying territories such as Tibet. The second has the United States allying itself with India to provide Tibetan resistance fighters with substantial assistance, in the form of both supplies and men, so that Tibetans could force the Chinese out of Tibet.

With the layout of the thesis now described, let us begin, as mentioned, with a look at Tibet's history and the complex relationship that has developed, over time, between Tibet and China.

II. TIBETAN HISTORY AND SINO-TIBETAN RELATIONS

A. TIBET'S BEGINNINGS

In order to understand what brought about the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950 it is necessary to go back to the first days of Tibet. Although documentary evidence of Tibet's formation is not readily available, a consensus has been reached: "Most Tibetan scholars agree that Tibet's recorded history begins with the enthronement of Son-Tsan Gam-Po in A.D. 620, and his reign until A.D. 650" (McCarthy, 1997, p. 12). During this period, he married a Nepalese and a Chinese princess. This fact is important for two reasons. First of all, both princesses were Buddhists, and, although they were not the first to introduce Buddhism to Tibet, they helped spread Buddhism which led to the replacement of the original religion: Bon.

Secondly, the Chinese princess, Wencheng, is significant because she was forced to marry Son-Tsan Gam-Po as part of a truce agreement, after his armies defeated the Chinese. With her arrival in 641, the Tibetan leader began to be swayed by Chinese cultural influences, and Chinese traits started replacing Nepalese characteristics. However, just how much impact Chinese culture had is questionable since, at the same time, the Tibetans adopted Indian script for their written language. Yet despite these varied influences, China later used selective information about its impacts to its advantage. "Chinese governments would claim that Wencheng's arrival in Tibet began the process of civilization of the Tibetans and their cultural and political assimilation to China" (Smith, Jr., 1996, p. 63). Clearly, during this early period of its history, Tibet was influenced by both China and India, and was not under Chinese subjugation. Soon, though, the Chinese would attempt to change the situation.

In 650, after Son-Tsan Gam-Po's death, figuring Tibet would be weakened and vulnerable, China attacked. The Chinese were successful, and captured the capital, Lhasa. However, they were unable to hold onto their gains due to the harsh Tibetan environment, and before long withdrew back to China. This was the first example of the Chinese attempting to incorporate Tibet into China, but far from the last. This process

would repeat itself numerous times until finally culminating in the Chinese invasion of Tibet 1,300 years later.

B. THE AGE OF TIBETAN EMPIRE

The next significant trend begins in the eighth century. Throughout the first half of that century, the Chinese T'ang dynasty and Tibetans fought one another, each suing for peace requests whenever the tide of battle began to turn against it. The fighting went on like this for many years, and all the while Tibet grew in strength and size. In fact, in 763, the Tibetans temporarily captured the T'ang capital of Chang-an, and the extent of the Tibetan empire "crossed the Pamirs and touched the domains of Arabs and Turks" (McCarthy, p. 12).

Finally, in 822, the Tibetans reached the zenith of their empire when they concluded a peace treaty with the T'ang dynasty. The treaty, which was inscribed on a stone pillar in front of the Jokhang temple in Lhasa, stated in part: "This Agreement, that the Tibetans shall be happy in Tibet and the Chinese happy in China and the great kingdoms united, shall never be changed" (Smith, Jr., p. 73). In other words, the treaty acknowledged the fact that Tibet and China were equal entities, and recognized "Tibet as a separate state with its own inviolable territory" (p. 74). In fact, during this period of empire, Tibetans solidified their national identity by driving others out of what was considered to be Tibetan territory, and combining the remaining peoples within Tibet's borders into one group. Also, Buddhism was accepted as the official religion, and a Tibetan alphabet and grammar were adopted. The foundation for national identity was thus established. According to Warren Smith, "The two centuries of Tibetan imperial adventure had great implications for Tibetan ethnic identity, primarily in that the tribes of the plateau were mixed to an extent that a new collective identity, 'Tibetan,' was created" (p. 77).

Yet, despite these advancements and Chinese recognition of Tibet as an equal, in the future China would still claim Tibet as a historic part of China. How can we account for this reversal of Tibet's fortunes? The transition can be found beginning with the assassination of the last Tibetan king, Trisong Detsen, in 838. After his assassination, Tibet once again regressed and became a land of small independent states led by warlords where no single state had the power to unite all the Tibetan peoples under one ruler.

However, there was another even more important factor: the increasing role played by Buddhism.

C. EMERGENCE OF A BUDDHIST STATE

With the fracturing of Tibet, the only commonality remaining among the various states was Buddhism, which had been previously spread throughout the land. Furthermore, not only was Buddhism the accepted religion, it also slowly developed a growing role in other aspects of Tibetan life. The influence of Buddhism was so great that, by the start of the thirteenth century, “Buddhist sects had become the dominant economic, political and spiritual authorities in Tibet, but Tibet remained disunited because no one sect was powerful enough to dominate the others” (p. 82). The fact that Tibet remained without central authority while Buddhism fundamentally changed the way each statelet was governed, opened the door to future conquerors. Now, instead of having one overall ruler in Tibet, there were numerous monks who established powerful monasteries, and fought each other in a continuing attempt to increase both their secular and religious powers. Factionalism continued to spread throughout Tibet, and each monk ruled his domain as he saw fit, and since the monks were now in control, leadership assumed much more of a religious intensity.

Buddhism, with its messages of love, friendship, tolerance, kindness, and ardor for peace, generally and gradually reduced and replaced the previous practice and spirit in Tibet of militarism and her willingness and determination to defend herself, her religion and her freedom. Tibet became markedly less secular, more religious, distinctly more isolationist and very vulnerable. (McCarthy, p. 14)

The first to take advantage of this vulnerability, and usher in another change to Tibetan society was the Mongols.

D. THE MONGOL EMPIRE

After conquering all of northern China, the Mongols, under the leadership of Godan Khan who was the grandson of Chingghis Khan, turned their attention to Tibet. Godan invaded Tibet, and nearly reached Lhasa. Then, in 1244, he “summoned Sakya Pandita..., the most eminent religious leader of his day, to surrender his country to Mongol control” (Powers, 1995, p. 139). Eventually, Pandita was able to convince the notables in Tibet that they should submit to the Mongols in order to avoid widespread

death and destruction. This, then, marked the first time Tibet became a vassal state, but it was to the Mongols not the Chinese. However, even though the Tibetans were subordinate to the Mongols, the Mongols chose not to rule the Tibetans directly, but instead a special relationship was developed.

This special relationship, known as Cho-Yon or patron-priest, was further strengthened when Khubilai Khan was initiated into the rites of Buddhism by Phagspa, Pandita's successor, around 1254. The essence of Cho-Yon, as explained by Smith, consists of the following:

The secular and the spiritual were regarded as equal in importance; the secular ruler was required to guarantee peace to his subjects so that they might be able to devote themselves to religion. As the secular and spiritual realms were equal, so were the rulers of each. The head of state and the head of religion were equally necessary for the ultimate salvation of humanity. Without peace provided by the secular ruler, humanity would have no opportunity to seek religion; without the leader of religion, there would be no path to salvation. (p. 95)

Since the relationship of the secular and religious leaders is so important in the patron-priest arrangement, it is apparent that the success of this relationship hinges upon the personalities of the religious and secular leaders. Fortunately for the Tibetans, the Cho-Yon relationship worked extremely well between Phagspa and Khubilai Khan, but such was not the case once Khubilai Khan's successor came to power.

Another point to consider is that by initiating this relationship, a bad precedent was set: "It established the Buddhist church, with its inherent dependence upon foreign patronage, as the dominant political authority in Tibet" (p. 100). Not surprisingly, the Chinese later exploited this aspect of the Cho-Yon relationship to establish suzerainty over Tibet, and strengthened their position further by claiming that Tibet was and always had been an integral part of China. However, the first steps in this Chinese quest for Tibet would have to wait until the Mongol empire began to collapse, which took until the seventeenth century, when the Manchu came to power.

E. THE MANCHU AND CHO-YON

The Manchu Ch'ing dynasty completed its conquest of China in 1644, and in 1648 the emperor requested that the Fifth Dalai Lama come to Peking in order to discuss

an alliance between China and Tibet. Although quickly agreed to by the Dalai Lama, the proposed meeting did not occur until 1653, but once the two leaders met, a modified Cho-Yon relationship was established. The main reason the Manchu wanted to establish a relationship was “because the Tibetans had extraordinary influence in Mongol affairs” (p. 113), and the Manchu wanted submission from the Mongols. In other words the Manchu would give the Tibetans what they wanted so that the Manchu would not have to worry about Mongol uprisings. Yet another departure from previous patron-priest relations, and even more telling of how the Manchu regarded Cho-Yon, was that the emperor had no intention of adopting the Tibetan Buddhist faith. As a consequence, there was no mutual relationship established between the secular and religious leaders as prescribed in the traditional interpretation of the Cho-Yon relationship. The only benefit to the Ch’ing, and the only item with which they were concerned, was Tibet’s influence over the Mongols. Therefore, one can say that this relationship marked the beginning of Tibet’s subservience to China since China would only honor the agreement until such time as the relationship was no longer needed to obtain its goals. Nevermind, though, that the Chinese were approaching the patron-priest relationship differently than in the past; it still worked as long as the Great Fifth, as the Fifth Dalai Lama was known, was still alive. The relationship remained effective because the Great Fifth was a strong leader who managed to establish a powerful central government in Lhasa, and at the same time, earned the respect of the Manchus.

Unfortunately, two key events eventually did lead to the disintegration of the true Cho-Yon relationship. The first was the Fifth Dalai Lama’s establishment of the position of Panchen Lama, which he conferred upon his teacher as a sign of the great esteem in which he held him. In addition to displaying this respect this way, the Great Fifth made the Panchen Lama the official ruler of the Tashilhunpo region of Tibet. This meant that the Dalai Lama was no longer in control of all of Tibet, although he did control the vast majority of the country and, as with Cho-Yon, the success of the arrangement relied upon the personalities of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. Furthermore, this division of power, meant as the greatest of gifts, was something the Chinese exploited again and again by pitting the Panchen and Dalai Lamas against one another in the hopes of strengthening Chinese control over Tibet.

The second influential factor was the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1682. As stated earlier, the Cho-Yon relationship depended upon the relationship established between the religious and secular leaders, and with the death of the Great Fifth a new era was born. At the time of the Dalai Lama's death, the Tibetan regent concealed this fact from the Chinese so that he could rule Tibet. Then, to avert suspicion about the Dalai Lama's whereabouts, he claimed that the Dalai Lama had entered an extended period of meditation. The regent was able to carry on this charade for fourteen years until the Chinese visited Tibet, and the regent had to produce the reincarnated Sixth Dalai Lama. Consequently, a young boy chosen by the regent was presented to the Chinese as the Sixth Dalai Lama, but when he became old enough to take his vows as a Buddhist monk he refused to do so. As a result, he was deposed, and this "basically marked the beginning of constant interference by or involvement of the Chinese in the affairs of Tibet" (McCarthy, p. 16). The era of strong, central Tibetan leadership was at an end.

F. THE GURKHAS INVADE

After the debacle with the Sixth Dalai Lama, the Chinese established a more direct rule over Tibet through the use of *ambans*. These ambans were the official Ch'ing representatives in Tibet, and served, according to Roger McCarthy, as "Minister residents" (p. 19). In addition, the new Seventh Dalai Lama was exiled from Lhasa after it was learned that his father had anti-Ch'ing sentiments. Then, in order to fill the religious void left by the departure of the Dalai Lama, the Chinese installed the Panchen Lama as a political figurehead while the Chinese ambans retained the real administrative power in Tibet. This arrangement remained in effect until 1781 when the Eighth Dalai Lama, who had been discovered after the death of the Seventh Dalai Lama, assumed political authority over Tibet after the death of the Panchen Lama in 1780. With this change in structure, the Dalai Lama and ambans began a joint rule of Tibet, but still conditions within Tibet did not change drastically unless there was unrest. "During times when Tibet was stable, the Chinese rulers showed little interest in internal Tibetan affairs; imperial meddling and the Chinese military presence dwindled. When internal troubles arose, the emperor would personally intervene to restore order" (Powers, p. 151). However, much to the dismay of the Chinese emperor, though this arrangement worked well for domestic issues, he was totally powerless in the realm of foreign relations.

Tension began to escalate between Tibet and Nepal once the Eighth Dalai Lama assumed power. For several years, there had been conflict between the two countries because Tibet refused to devalue its currency, and intervened to counter an attack by the Gurkhas on Sikkim in 1775. Finally, in 1788 and again in 1791, the Gurkhas invaded Tibet to show their displeasure with recent Tibetan activities. Luckily for the Tibetans, the Gurkhas were finally driven out of Tibetan territory after both the ambans and the Tibetans appealed to the Ch'ing emperor for military assistance. However, the ease with which the Gurkhas were able to invade Tibet made the Chinese realize that their existing arrangement with the Tibetans was not sufficient, and there was a need for "strengthening their control of Tibet's domestic as well as foreign affairs" (Smith, p. 134). As a consequence, the ambans were not only made responsible for Tibetan affairs, but also "took control of Tibetan frontier defense and foreign affairs" (p. 135). In the emperor's eyes, Tibet had proven she could not take care of herself, and in order to prevent the takeover of Tibet by a foreign power, stronger measures were warranted.

The Gurkha encounter marked the zenith of the Ch'ing empire, and shortly thereafter, the empire entered decline which reduced China's ability to directly administer Tibet. In fact, in 1855, the Gurkhas attacked Tibet once more, but this time the Ch'ing were unable to aid the Tibetans due to their ongoing Taiping Rebellion. As a result, the Tibetans had a treaty imposed on them, and were forced to pay the Gurkhas tribute in order to terminate the conflict. Therefore, even though the Chinese still wanted to maintain control over Tibet, still exercised some authority there, and still claimed they would protect Tibet, the days of China enforcing its will were gone. A new approach would have to be pursued to keep Russia and Great Britain at bay during the period known as the Great Game.

G. THE GREAT GAME

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, Tibet had closed itself off from the rest of the world in the hopes of preventing further invasions, such as the one endured at the hands of the Gurkhas. In addition, Tibetan xenophobia was driven by two other factors:

First there were their gold fields, ...on which Lhasa was now convinced the British had designs. Secondly, and far more alarming to the Tibetans,

was the threat to their religion which, the Chinese told them, the British and Russians were aiming to destroy. (Hopkirk, 1982, pp. 56-57).

Thus, due to its inaccessibility, Tibet became more desirable to foreigners – especially to Britons and Russians – and the drive began to become the first to reach Tibet’s capital of Lhasa and establish political relations with Tibet. Consequently, with the initiation of the Great Game, Tibet was transformed “from a remote dependency of the Ch’ing into an object of international interest” (Smith, Jr., p. 151). However, Tibetans were determined to remain isolated, and the prize of being the first to reach Lhasa would not come easily.

The first attempt to reach the capital was made in the spring of 1879 by a Russian expedition under the command of Nikolai Prejevalsky, but he was stopped 150 miles short of Lhasa by the Tibetans and forced to turn back. The Tibetans were under the mistaken impression that Prejevalsky “was coming, as spearhead of a Tsarist invasion force, to kidnap the Dalai Lama and carry him off” (Hopkirk, p. 60). As evident from this episode, the Tibetans just wanted to be left alone to live their lives as they desired. However, they were willing to call upon the Chinese, who still exercised nominal authority, to expel foreign aggressors, although such measures had not been required in the case of the Prejevalsky expedition. Then, the Tibetan viewpoint underwent a radical change when China was defeated by Japan in 1895.

With that defeat, Tibet realized China could no longer be relied upon to defend Tibet’s interests, and since it was felt protection was still required, the search for a new political patron began. Tibet understood that China, Russia, and Great Britain feared the expansionist tendencies of each other, and would do their utmost to establish lasting relations with Tibet, but Tibet had a specific partner in mind. “The Tibetans thought of Russia as an imperial power capable of protecting Tibet against both the Chinese and the British but too far away to be a threat to Tibet itself” (Smith, Jr., p. 155).

As a result of these beliefs, beginning in 1898, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama sent an envoy, Agvan Dorjiev, to meet with Czar Nicholas in order to establish closer relations with Russia. At the same time, though, the Tibetans purposely disregarded requests from Great Britain to establish relations. It was clear “the Dalai Lama and his government remained resolved not to enter into a dialogue with the British” (van Walt van Praag,

1987, p. 32). Unfortunately for the Tibetans, the British began suspecting Tibet of working with the Russians, and dread of this possibility began to consume Lord Curzon, the British Viceroy of India. Thus, by early 1903, he became “convinced that the only effective course of action was for Britain to dispatch a mission to Lhasa – using force if necessary – to discover the truth, and to put relations with the Tibetans on a firm and proper basis” (Hopkirk, p. 162).

The excuse for this expedition was supplied in April 1903 when: “The Ch’ing amban in Lhasa finally responded to repeated British requests to renegotiate the 1893 trade provisions of the 1890 Sikkim treaty” (Smith, p. 156). The request was then followed up by the formation of a mission, under the command of Colonel Francis Younghusband, whose alleged purpose was to renegotiate the trade provisions. However, the expedition’s real purpose was “to achieve the ‘formal recognition of exclusive political influence’ of the British in Tibet to thwart Russian intentions” (van Walt van Praag, p. 33).

Finally, after securing the supplies and manpower thought needed, the expedition departed for Tibet in July of 1903. Yet the British had seriously underestimated the determination of the Tibetans to maintain their isolation, and the British encountered Tibetan resistance as soon as they crossed the Tibetan border. The Tibetans would not allow the British to remain in Tibetan territory to conduct the negotiations even though the amban had directed them to allow the British to enter. However, being just as determined as the Tibetans, the British refused to depart, and established camp for the winter.

Then, after being reinforced with soldiers from India, the expedition pushed towards Gyantse in March of 1904. Despite being confronted by overwhelming superiority in men and firepower, the Tibetans still refused to yield, and set up a roadblock just before Gyantse. There they valiantly engaged the British in a hopeless battle. After defeating the Tibetans, the British continued their push towards Gyantse and eventually Lhasa. Thus, on the third of August, after a series of skirmishes “during which an unknown number of Tibetans were ‘shot down like partridges,’ the British made a triumphant march into Lhasa” (McCarthy, p. 18). Upon entering Lhasa, Colonel

Younghusband searched for signs of the Russians, but soon realized that there were “no arsenals of Russian arms, ... no advisers from St Petersburg, and no trace of a secret treaty of any kind” (Hopkirk, p. 186). In fact, the Russians had never been to Lhasa, and Younghusband was the first European to reach the capital.

Younghusband then set to work establishing direct negotiations with the Tibetans because the amban had admitted to him that he was powerless to negotiate on behalf of the Tibetans. An agreement was finally reached, known as the 1904 Lhasa Convention, and signed on the seventh of September. “In it Britain established a precedent of direct negotiation with Tibet over and above that right claimed by China. The Convention also established Britain as a most favored nation with ‘special interests’ in Tibet” (McCarthy, p. 18). In effect, by negotiating directly with Tibet, the British government recognized the right of the Tibetan leadership to conduct negotiations independently of China, which in turn confirmed the independent status of Tibet. Clearly, Tibet was no longer under the tight control of China, and her period of international isolation was finished. However, after a mere seven weeks in Lhasa, Colonel Younghusband departed on 23 September 1904, without leaving any permanent British presence in the capital, and things immediately began to change.

The international community was not pleased with the Lhasa Convention, and took swift action. The Chinese government, for one sought negotiations with the British in the hopes of removing Tibet’s rights to independently conduct negotiations in the future. “China therefore moved to assume the obligations of the Convention and convert what had been an agreement between Britain and Tibet into one between Britain and China” (Smith, Jr., p. 160). As part of these negotiations, Great Britain and China agreed that China would have some relation to Tibet, and the somewhat vague term of “suzerainty” was the compromise eventually reached. According to The Oxford English Dictionary, a suzerain is “a sovereign or state having supremacy over another state which possesses its own ruler or government but cannot act as an independent power.”

Thus, the Chinese chose – and continue – to interpret this term as meaning they retain sovereignty over Tibet, and are therefore entitled to rule Tibet directly. The British, on the other hand, interpreted suzerainty to mean that Tibet held its own

government under the overarching control of China. Tragically, “The terms ‘suzerainty’ and ‘sovereignty’ were not used in the treaty...despite British concern that their omission would lead to repeated claims to sovereignty in the future” (van Walt van Praag, p. 38). As a consequence of this omission from the Adhesion Treaty of 1906 between China and Great Britain, the true nature of China’s accepted role in Tibetan affairs remained a mystery to the international community, and came back to haunt the Tibetans. The Chinese would use the vagueness of the treaty to justify their attempts to incorporate Tibet into China, while at the same time, the international community would refuse to accept Tibet’s declarations of independence based on its acceptance of China’s suzerainty over Tibet.

The other agreement negating the gains made by Tibet in the Lhasa Convention was the treaty concluded by Great Britain and Russia in 1907. In this treaty:

With regard to Tibet, the two powers agreed to abstain from all interference in its internal affairs, to seek no concessions for railways, roads, mines or telegraphs, to send no representatives there, but to deal with Lhasa only through China, the suzerain power. (Hopkirk, 1994, p. 520)

Thus, with the signing of this treaty, the Great Game came to an end. The door was now left wide open for China to once again make a move against Tibet, and fill the political void left by the Russians and British. China would not wait long to act.

H. MANCHU AGGRESSION

Even before the Adhesion Treaty had been finalized, China began working to reestablish its grip on Tibet. The emperor told the British he would pay the indemnity Tibet had agreed to pay the British when Tibet signed the Lhasa Convention. The British agreed to the proposition, and the Tibetans “unwisely accepted the Emperor’s offer of payment and displayed little awareness of the implications of such acceptance” (van Walt van Praag, p. 40). Thus, with the assumption of payments, the Chinese slowly reasserted their control over Tibet.

Another factor helping the Chinese was that the Dalai Lama had been in exile since fleeing Lhasa in 1904 in advance of the Younghusband expedition, and during his absence Tibet lacked a strong Tibetan government. The Chinese took advantage of this

vulnerability, and filled the government with more Chinese representatives while simultaneously removing all British influence in the area. To facilitate this endeavor, the Chinese, under the leadership of General Chao Erh-feng, invaded Kham, the eastern portion of Tibet, with the aim of subduing Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule. The campaign was so successful that by 1909 “Chao appointed Chinese magistrates in the place of Tibetans, introduced new laws limiting the number of lamas and depriving monasteries of their temporal power, and inaugurated schemes for having the land cultivated by Chinese immigrants” (McCarthy, p. 19). Plus, with the backing of thousands of nearby Chinese troops, “the Chinese Amban in Lhasa began to take all power into his hands, reducing the Tibetan ministers to puppets” (p. 19).

Upon his return to Tibet in December 1909, the Dalai Lama recognized his predicament, and tried to negotiate a compromise with the Chinese. However, the Chinese were unwilling to concede anything, and the Dalai Lama left Tibet once again in February 1910. Thus, the Chinese now had free reign, and quickly claimed sovereignty over Tibet versus the internationally accepted suzerainty. Although Great Britain was well within her rights to protest these aggressive Chinese actions, the British, quite surprisingly, did not object. “The British, not wishing to further irritate China, remained largely quiet and discouraged all efforts by the Dalai Lama to foment resistance against the Chinese in Tibet” (p. 19). By this inaction, Great Britain sent her signal that she was willing to surrender Tibet to the Chinese.

The other long-term significance of the Manchu invasion was that it effectively shattered the underlying premise of the longstanding Cho-Yon relationship. “The Patron/Protector was now invading the country of his Priest, destroying the religion of the Protected, and deposing the Lama, who was the object of his worship and protection” (van Walt van Praag, p. 45)! Even though the Dalai Lama, for instance, attempted to resurrect the Cho-Yon relationship in the future, the Chinese were not about to accept its reinstatement. However, in 1912, before the Chinese could fully incorporate Tibet into China, the Manchu dynasty collapsed in the midst of the Chinese revolution, and a new era in Tibetan history was established.

I. INDEPENDENT TIBET?

With the formation of the Chinese Republic in 1912, Chinese troops mutinied, and surrendered to the Tibetans. Meanwhile, in the midst of this chaos, the Dalai Lama “returned to Lhasa in 1912 and declared Tibet independent, following which the remaining Chinese officials and soldiers were required to leave Tibet” (McCarthy, p. 20). With these words, Tibet became free from a Chinese presence for the first time since the eighteenth century. However, Tibet failed to follow up this declaration with the diplomatic measures necessary to have her independence recognized by international law, although it must be pointed out that the fault for this lack of diplomatic recognition cannot be blamed solely on the Tibetans. It must also be attributed to Great Britain.

The Tibetan effort to have her independence officially recognized began in 1913, in negotiations associated with the Simla Convention. During the negotiations, Tibet made a strong case for her independence in the opening position statement:

It is decided that Tibet is an independent state and that the precious Protector, the Dalai Lama, is the ruler of Tibet, in all temporal as well as spiritual affairs. Tibet repudiates the Anglo-Chinese Convention concluded at Peking [sic] on the 27th April 1906, ...as she did not send a representative for this Convention nor did she affix her seal on it. (Smith, p. 191)

Needless to say, the Chinese would not accept this position. Great Britain then began negotiating with the Tibetans and Chinese to see if a compromise could be reached on this issue, and to establish Tibetan territorial boundaries. Eventually, the Chinese and Tibetan negotiators agreed that Tibet would be split into two parts consisting of: Inner Tibet (eastern Kham and Amdo) and Outer Tibet (western Kham, central and western Tibet). In addition, both portions of Tibet would be recognized under the suzerainty of China while Outer Tibet was also granted some degree of self-rule (p. 197). Predictably perhaps, the Chinese government refused to accept these conditions and the three-way Simla Convention collapsed in April 1914. Yet despite this fact, the British and Tibetan representatives still initialed a document recognizing the terms of the convention. Unfortunately, though, this only bound Tibet and Great Britain, and future attempts to induce the Chinese to accept the Convention proved fruitless.

As it turned out, the issue of Tibet was not raised again until the 1922 Washington Conference which convened to deal with post-war armaments and Far East issues. At this time, the issue of Chinese territory was considered, but the agreed upon solution was far from satisfactory. “The American delegate compromised by avoiding the term ‘China proper,’ but did not adopt the term ‘Chinese Republic.’ Instead, the treaty left vague the definition of the territories under Chinese sovereignty by referring to the territorial integrity of ‘China” (p. 213). Thus, by not delineating what comprised Chinese territory, the treaty left open to interpretation what would and would not be considered a part of China in future disagreements over the status of Tibet.

However, the damage inflicted upon Tibet’s quest for independence was not quite complete. Yet another blow against Tibet was struck when the United States “assured the Chinese that the United States recognized Chinese sovereignty over Tibet” (p. 214). This was significant for two reasons. First, in agreeing to this, the United States was recognizing China’s sovereignty and not suzerainty over Tibet, which ran counter to what had been previously established in the international community. Second, despite this recognition, nothing was ever put in writing and formally agreed to regarding the status of Tibet. Therefore, the United States had a means of escape if ever pressed on the issue in the future.

To cloud the issue further, Great Britain continued to treat Tibet “as a *de facto* autonomous state but ceased efforts to achieve Chinese recognition of that fact” (italics in original, p. 214). Thus, Great Britain recognized Tibet’s claim of independence, but did not pressure the Chinese to likewise accept Tibet’s claim. Consequently, without Chinese recognition, British opinions were useless, and were treated that way by the Chinese.

Finally, as if the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was not encountering enough trouble in his bid to attain recognition for an independent Tibet, he also faced domestic challenges. The Dalai Lama attempted to form a modern Tibetan army, organized along British lines, as well as a police force. This way, the Dalai Lama reasoned, Tibet would not have to rely on outsiders to maintain security. However, despite this logical approach, there were two reasons this effort was opposed. To begin with, sustaining a modern army is an

expensive undertaking, and Tibet had few sources of revenue. As a consequence, taxes were required to generate the needed funds, and the only ones who could conceivably withstand taxation on an ongoing basis were the secular and monastic semi-autonomous estates. The estates, needless to say, did not favor such a tax because it was “thought an infringement of their traditional autonomy” (p. 216). The estates had not paid taxes in the past, and felt there was no reason why they should be forced to pay taxes now. Besides, the estates would much rather keep their profits than have to share them with the government.

The other reason for opposition was also grounded in tradition. Tibet’s monks and government officials were worried because they

saw the new military program as becoming stronger as an entity and thus a potential threat to what each had long enjoyed under the theocratic state. ...both began to undermine wherever and whenever they could the Dalai Lama’s intention to further modernize and strengthen Tibet’s army. (McCarthy, p. 33)

The church worried that because officers tended to be more modern thinking, the army would challenge it as it sought to do what was best for Tibet. Given this opposition to them, the officers came to blame the religious leadership and its dependence on Cho-Yon for holding Tibet back. In order for Tibet to secure her independence, then, they felt a shift had to be made to a more secular government structure, which of course the religious elite vehemently opposed.

Yet, as noted earlier, it was not just the religious sector that was opposed to modernization. Government officials also fought the idea so that they would not lose their control, and the combined effect of the religious and secular communities working against the Dalai Lama’s measures proved catastrophic. “Those responsible for Tibet remained in near total disagreement and turmoil, thereby weakening Tibet to the point that its government began to border on helplessness” (p. 35).

Even with this opposition, something could probably have been salvaged if the Dalai and Panchen Lamas had united in the fight to modernize the army. But here, too, there was friction. The Panchen Lama, the second most important individual in Tibet, differed from the Dalai Lama in opposing modernization because one quarter of the taxes

raised were to come from his area of Tashilhunpo, and he thought this was unfair. To show his displeasure, the Panchen Lama fled first to Mongolia and eventually to Peking where he was warmly greeted by the Chinese.

With the flight of the Panchen Lama to China, the Dalai Lama's plans for him to unite Tibet were not only crushed, but this placed him in a precarious position. The Chinese now had the means to instigate rivalry between the two most revered men in Tibet, and possessed a tool for securing what they ultimately wanted: namely, the subjugation of Tibet. Worse, with the Panchen Lama's breakaway move, Tibet was bound to remain fractured, weak, and vulnerable to outside influence.

The British, meanwhile, still with interests in the region recognized the Dalai Lama's vulnerability, and understood that the only way to secure Tibet's continued autonomous status was to make a permanent military commitment to Tibet. For the time being, then, Great Britain offered protection when and if it were needed. Ironically, in doing this though, Great Britain was tacitly continuing to recognize China's suzerainty over Tibet. With British acceptance of suzerainty, the Chinese in turn were able to "maintain their claims even when their actual authority was nonexistent" (p.228). This meant that once China was strong enough to pursue what she had always claimed was hers, she would be able to do so without opposition. Furthermore, by accepting China's suzerainty over Tibet, Great Britain "necessarily implied that Tibet was to some undefined degree less than independent" (p. 229). Therefore, the British were unwittingly aiding China, and impeding Tibet's bid for independence, even though the Chinese would have to wait until the conclusion of World War II before making their final attempt to absorb Tibet into China.

J. WORLD WAR II AND THE RISE OF THE COMMUNISTS

During World War II, Tibet tried to remain neutral, and for the most part was successful in this endeavor. However, once the Burma Road was severed by the Japanese, the allies lost their only overland route from South Asia into China. This forced them to rely on aerial resupply to furnish Chiang Kai-Shek, their Chinese ally, with the needed war materiel. This arrangement was far from ideal because the flight to China was extremely long and hazardous. Furthermore, only a fraction of the supplies that could be carried in a ground convoy could be ferried by aircraft. Therefore, the

United States determined that if the Tibetans could be convinced to allow the transport of war supplies from India, through Tibet, and on to China, the war effort would be markedly enhanced.

However, the Tibetans were extremely leery of allowing any Chinese into or through Tibet, regardless of the reason. The U.S. did eventually prevail upon Tibet to agree to accept a compromise. “It would permit the transit of nonmilitary goods destined for China, with the term ‘nonmilitary’ not to be interpreted too strictly” (Knaus, p. 5). Once presented with this link, however, the Chinese only wanted more, and managed to eliminate the one concession the Tibetans had been willing to make.

The Chinese attempted to use the war supplies transport plan to improve their position in Tibet; they announced that they would dispatch agents to supervise the transport of supplies all along the Tibetan trade routes. The Tibetans refused to allow this, even threatening to use force to prevent the entry of Chinese officials to Tibet. The Tibetans refused even to arrange transport through Chinese agents and in March 1943 curtailed all transport to China. (Smith, p. 243)

Thus, something that was designed to assist them even in their war effort was squandered by the Chinese because they were more concerned with strengthening their control over Tibet than with repelling the Japanese invaders. One important unintended consequence of this failed effort, though, was to have a long-term impact. “Tibet established relations with the United States and Tibet’s *de facto* independence and its desire for independence *de jure* were made known to the outside world” (italics in original, pp. 245-246).

The only other agreement reached with the Tibetans during World War II was that they “promise[d] to assist in rescuing any Allied pilots and crewmen downed in Tibet” (McCarthy, p. 43). This deal was struck during the Office of Strategic Service’s first and only mission to Tibet in 1942-1943. The purpose of this mission had been “to seek allies and discover enemies; locate strategic targets and survey the territory as a possible field for future activity” (Knaus, p. 5). However, beyond establishing an escape and evasion protocol, the mission accomplished nothing. Thus, with little to show for its effort, the United States chose not to engage the Tibetans on further issues during the war, and Tibet maintained her neutrality for the duration.

With the conclusion of World War II, Chinese attention initially turned inward. China was beset with domestic turmoil as the Communists, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, attempted to wrest control of China from the Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek. Finally, after several years of struggle against the Nationalist forces, the Communists succeeded in July 1949, when they captured Peking. With the formation of the People's Republic of China and Mao's centralization and consolidation of control, China could once again fix her gaze upon Tibet. China's intentions regarding Tibet were quickly made clear to the entire world. "On January 7, 1950, General Liu Bocheng announced that the Chinese Communist army, having crushed resistance in southwest China, would now 'liberate our compatriots in Tibet' (p. 47). Tibet's days of semi-autonomy, which had been enjoyed since 1912, were about to be abruptly and violently terminated.

III. INVASION AND INSURGENCY (1950-1959)

A. THE ONSLAUGHT

Once the Chinese announced their intentions to “liberate” Tibet, whether or not the Tibetans felt they were in need of liberation, a sense of uneasiness and dread enveloped the country. At the same time, the Tibetans issued pleas for help from the United States, Great Britain, and India to counter the inevitable invasion. Tibet proposed that missions be sent to both Washington, D.C. and London to discuss the issue, but these efforts were thwarted. The mission to Washington, D.C. was rerouted to New Delhi, India, and the British flatly refused to meet with a Tibetan mission saying that India should bear the responsibility for aiding Tibet now that Great Britain had withdrawn from the region. For her part, India decided to covertly furnish the Tibetans with arms while simultaneously not appearing too diplomatically friendly towards the Tibetans for fear of angering the Chinese. Thus, though the Tibetans tried, they came away with little material support, and even fewer promises of diplomatic assistance.

Time was rapidly running out on the Tibetans, and a sign of what was to happen appeared after a massive earthquake rocked all of Tibet in August 1950:

The sky over southeastern Tibet glowed with an ominous red glow, and people remembered that several years earlier the Nechung Oracle had faced eastward while in a trance and predicted in great agitation that Tibet was threatened with danger. . . . In addition, the top of an ancient column at the base of the Potala was found shattered one morning. This had been built in 763 in commemoration of Tibet’s victory over China. (Powers, p. 170)

With this portend of impending doom, the Tibetans braced themselves for what was to come, but resolved to resist the “liberation” to the best of their abilities even if they had to do it on their own. Their period of terrible uncertainty was almost at an end.

On 7 October 1950, the Chinese finally struck. “General Liu Ba-ting sent more than 80,000 troops of his First and Second Field Armies into Tibet ... simply overwhelming the Tibetans who at best were poorly organized and totally unprepared to fight such a force” (McCarthy, p. 52). The Tibetans fought valiantly, but their antiquated weaponry was no match for the modern tools of warfare the Chinese possessed. Within

days, the Chinese had utterly crushed the “tiny Tibetan army that could only be described as feudal in nature: a handful of ancient guns, the Dalai Lama’s personal guard, and armed monks and farmers” (Prados, 1986, p. 151).

While the Chinese attempted to consolidate their newly acquired gains, the Tibetans appealed to the United Nations for assistance on 11 November 1950, on the grounds that, while it was true Tibet had relations with China, they had been of a strictly personal and religious nature. The relationship had never been perceived by Tibet in a political context, so what the Chinese were doing was illegal. Though both the United States and Great Britain felt Tibet was justified in proclaiming autonomy, neither country was willing to sponsor a Tibetan resolution at the UN. Great Britain maintained that India should take the lead regarding the issue. Furthermore, since India believed in China’s suzerainty over Tibet, which was in direct contrast to Great Britain’s belief in Tibetan autonomy as set forth in the Simla Convention, Great Britain desired to avoid this potential conflict and preferred to follow India’s lead. Likewise, the United States felt support for Tibet was warranted in order to show the world the evil of the Chinese Communist ways, but that the issue was more pertinent to India than the U.S. Thus, once again, India should be allowed to lead, and the United States would simply follow.

Herein lay the problem. By leaving the fate of Tibet in the hands of India, the United States and Great Britain allowed India to ponder whether or not Tibet was more important than achieving one of India’s goals. India’s Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, had as his primary objective establishing India as the head of the non-aligned nations in order to mediate between the East-West, Cold War rivals whenever international conflict loomed or was in progress. Adopting the Tibetan cause at the UN could jeopardize this dream by placing India in the western “camp” and upsetting China which, as previously explained, is something India hoped to avoid. Predictably, India chose not to sponsor the UN resolution on Tibet, but unexpectedly, also declined to protest China’s actions. Consequently:

On November 24 the UN General Committee, which sets the Assembly’s agenda, unanimously voted to postpone consideration of the Tibetan appeal based on the assertion of India’s ambassador that Beijing’s latest note pointed toward a peaceful settlement. The United States supported

the postponement, a welcome respite for everyone but the Tibetans.
(Knaus, p. 74)

Thus, in Tibet's time of crisis, when immediate support was needed, she was essentially abandoned. The international community, after assurances from the Chinese, mistakenly believed that China would henceforward use peaceful means to resolve the Tibetan issue. Military victory had been achieved with hardly a whimper from the international community, but now the Chinese had to get the Tibetans to submit politically. That process would be much more demanding and time consuming, but the Chinese quickly set to work at this new task.

B. THE 17-POINT AGREEMENT

The first step in getting the Tibetans to fully submit to the Chinese was to convince the Tibetans to enter negotiations. This undertaking was initiated by the Chinese who, to entice the Tibetans, proclaimed that they would not touch Tibetan political and religious systems. To ensure the Chinese would follow through on this pledge, the Dalai Lama's advisors implored him to return to Lhasa. At the time, the Dalai Lama was in Yatung after having fled Lhasa during the invasion. Without the Dalai Lama's return, it was feared that "the Chinese would be less likely to honor those terms and Tibet would have no governmental authority to ensure that they did so" (Smith, p. 293). Therefore, given the available information, the Dalai Lama determined it would be best for the Tibetan people if negotiations commenced and he considered a return to Lhasa.

A Tibetan delegation was sent to Peking in April 1951 to see what terms could be reached, but members of the delegation were also expressly instructed not to conclude any agreement without the approval of the Tibetan Government. Curiously, to the Tibetan delegation, the first issue raised by the Chinese was the recognition of the Panchen Lama, who still resided in China, and who the Chinese considered to be the true incarnation of the Panchen Lama. Although this all seemed bewildering to the Tibetans, the Chinese were pursuing a specific agenda. Since the Panchen Lama had been living in China for so many years, he was considered to be pro-China by the Chinese government. As such, the Panchen Lama, if accepted by the Tibetans, could be used as a wedge

between the Dalai and Panchen lines of lamas and cause disunity in Tibet. The Panchen Lama was the perfect Chinese tool for pursuing a divide and conquer strategy.

The Tibetan delegation informed the Chinese that they were not allowed to make such an important decision, and would have to consult with the Tibetan Government. The Tibetan delegation was allowed to confer with its government, and after a few days of deliberation, the Tibetan government decided to accept the Panchen Lama as the true incarnation. Unfortunately for the Tibetan delegation, this was the last time the Chinese permitted it to consult with the Tibetan Government. From here on out, the tone of the negotiations shifted radically.

Whenever the Tibetans and Chinese disagreed, the Chinese pointed out that the issue could be resolved peacefully, through this negotiation process, or the Chinese would resolve it forcefully using their troops in Tibet. Consequently, the Tibetans were browbeaten into accepting everything the Chinese proposed, and true negotiations ceased to exist. As the Dalai Lama later explained:

Ultimately, the Chinese drafted a revised agreement, with seventeen articles. This was presented as an ultimatum. Our delegates were not allowed to make any alterations or suggestions. They were insulted and abused and threatened with personal violence, and with further military action against the people of Tibet, and they were not allowed to refer to me or my government for further instructions. (p. 296)

Given the intense pressure and China's refusal to allow the Tibetan delegation to confer with the Tibetan Government, the delegation finally signed the agreement in the hopes of averting further violence in Tibet. Needless to say, the Dalai Lama was surprised when he heard the Chinese announce that an agreement had been concluded, and "he was shocked that the delegation had exceeded what he thought was its limited powers" (Knaus, p. 85). Yet, despite signing the document without the approval of the Tibetan Government, the delegation did manage to achieve one small, but significant victory. To officially accept the agreement, the delegation was required to affix the official Tibetan Government seal, but did not do this. Instead, the delegation members affixed their personal seals which technically meant the agreement had not been accepted by Tibet. The Dalai Lama would still have to consent to accepting the terms of the document.

Before turning to the quandary this presented the Dalai Lama, let us first explore certain components of the 17-Point Agreement in order to gain a fuller appreciation for what the Chinese were proposing to the Tibetans.

Of particular interest are points 4, 7, 11, and 13, which are as follows:

4. The Central Authorities will not alter the existing political system in Tibet. The Central Authorities also will not alter the established status, functions, and powers of the Dalai Lama. Officials of various ranks will hold office as usual.

7. The policy of freedom of religious belief laid down in the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference shall be carried out. The religious beliefs, customs, and habits of the Tibetan people shall be respected, and lama monasteries shall be protected. The central authorities will not effect a change in the income of the monasteries.

11. In matters related to various reforms in Tibet, there will be no compulsion on the part of the central authorities. The local government of Tibet should carry out reforms of its own accord, and when the people raise demands for reform, they shall be settled by means of consultation with the leading personnel of Tibet.

13. The People's Liberation Army entering Tibet shall abide by all the above-mentioned policies and shall also be fair in buying and selling and shall not arbitrarily take a single needle or thread from the people. (Smith, pp. 299-300)

In sum, these points stressed that the running of political and religious life in Tibet would remain unaffected, and these aspects would be controlled by Tibetans not Chinese. Also, the Chinese would not attempt to institute reform unless the Tibetans called for change and, once more, the actual implementation was to be accomplished by Tibetans. Finally, the army would not be allowed to act in the manner of a traditional conquering army by looting and pillaging everywhere it went.

Faced with such seemingly reasonable terms, the Dalai Lama had a difficult decision to make. Should he turn down the agreement, in the hopes of pursuing Tibetan independence, and seek exile outside of Tibet? If this course was pursued, he knew he had to obtain outside support if there was to be any chance for success. There was a glimmer of hope in this regard since the United States had expressed some interest in

aiding Tibet's cause, but no firm commitment was forthcoming. "Washington believed that if the Dalai Lama could be removed from Tibet and established in a nearby Buddhist country he 'might make a go of it' in his claim for an independent Tibet. In any event this action would serve the U.S. purpose of doing anything possible 'to get in the way of the Chinese Communists'" (Knaus, p. 88). If, and only if, the Dalai Lama was willing to take this bold step, in addition to formally rejecting the 17-Point Agreement, would the United States be willing to provide the Tibetans with limited assistance. However, since the Dalai Lama insisted upon a written guarantee from the U.S. for assistance before he would enter exile, and the U.S. refused to provide this commitment until the Dalai Lama fled Tibet, a curious impasse was reached. Both sides refused to trust the word of the other, and no further progress was made. The Dalai Lama had to decide if he should enter exile and rely upon the United States government to follow through on its verbal commitment, or should he choose the second option available to him?

This second option was for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government to officially recognize the 17-Point Agreement. Here, too, there were benefits and drawbacks. On the positive side, the Dalai Lama felt that, if the agreement was accepted, he could return to Lhasa where he could best serve his people. "Many thought China more likely to impose strict control on Tibet if the Dalai Lama angered them by repudiating the agreement, whereas Tibetan acquiescence to the Chinese conditions, and the Dalai Lama's continuing influence, might ameliorate conditions of the Chinese occupation in Tibet" (Smith, p. 314). Additionally, he hoped to be able to work directly with the Chinese to settle any differences of opinion when they arose, as well as play a significant role in the day-to-day administration of Tibet. Such an active role would be impossible if the Dalai Lama chose exile. On the flip side, by accepting the 17-Point Agreement, the Dalai Lama knew he would have to abandon his dream of establishing an independent Tibet.

The Dalai Lama received sound advice from family members and advisors on both sides of the issue, and carefully weighed his options before deciding. When choosing which option to pursue, two considerations appear to have weighed most heavily. First, the Dalai Lama wanted to do as much as he possibly could for his people, and he realized his options would be severely restricted if he chose exile. Second, the

refusal of the United States to provide him with anything other than verbal assurances of support helped seal his decision. The Dalai Lama “never saw a written statement of the U.S. promises that were being made at that time, and he was skeptical about verbal reassurances unsupported by an officially signed document” (Knaus, p. 100). Thus, in July, the Dalai Lama departed for Lhasa and on 28 September 1951, the Tibetan Government formally accepted the 17-Point Agreement “on the majority opinion that it promised the continuation of Tibet’s religious government and monastic system together with the estate system on which it was based” (Smith, p. 319).

With the acceptance of this agreement, Tibet officially became a part of China, and China achieved the toughest portion of its long sought goal. More importantly, though, according to Smith:

Even though Tibetan agreement to the 17-Point Agreement was coerced, and thus could be held to be in violation of international law, Tibet’s formal acceptance of the agreement, and thus of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, essentially eliminated Tibet’s claim to independent statehood within international law. (p. 322)

Now it was time to fully incorporate Tibet into the People’s Republic of China, but first preparations had to be made. As a consequence, the first few years of Chinese rule were not exceedingly oppressive, but that would change soon enough.

C. EARLY OCCUPATION

Even though Chinese rule was initially flexible and followed the provisions of the 17-Point Agreement, the changes were still traumatic for the Tibetans and their way of life. “Communist rule was wrenching for Tibetan society. Economic development, industrial production, even the introduction of money, required fundamental changes in a society that had used barter as a primary form of exchange” (Prados, p. 151). It is true that the Tibetans still had some say in how they were ruled and were still allowed to practice their religion, but nonetheless, the changes made a significant impact on Tibetan life. Furthermore, the Chinese took away the Tibetans’ food in order to feed their troops, resulting in famine in Lhasa for the first time ever. The famine angered the Tibetans because they knew the Chinese were taking care of their own men at the expense of the Tibetan population. As a consequence, the Tibetans began showing their displeasure with Chinese occupation in nonviolent ways. “Petitions demanding that the Chinese

leave Tibet were circulated and even sent to the Chinese military officials. Posters attacking and ridiculing the Chinese were to be seen throughout Lhasa, and anti-Chinese songs were sung openly in the streets” (McCarthy, p. 69). However, the situation did not improve as a consequence. But nor did the Chinese crack down on this Tibetan insubordination. Why, we might wonder, did the Chinese allow this Tibetan resistance? In order to answer that question, it is necessary to briefly examine Tibetan infrastructure.

When the Chinese first invaded Tibet, no infrastructure existed. The Chinese quickly realized that if they had met significant resistance to their military onslaught, they would have encountered tremendous difficulty supplying their troops in Tibet – as evidenced by the famine – and it would have been even more difficult to position troops throughout the country.

There were no railroads, roads, or even airfields, a condition that not only precluded rapid economic development but also prohibited any extensive military operations using modern equipment. The Chinese set out to remedy this with two massive construction efforts – a road from Lake Koko Nor across the ancient Tibetan province of Amdo to Lhasa, and another across Kham from Kangting to Lhasa. (Prados, pp. 151-152).

The Chinese knew that, without roads in Tibet, moving anything from one place to another would be extremely difficult. If the Tibetans decided to replace their protests with violent action, the Chinese had to have had a way to get men and materiel to the unstable area rapidly. Besides, the Chinese knew that Tibet was not yet fully incorporated, and there would probably be some resistance as soon as the pressure to incorporate was increased. Therefore, putting in place the initial components of a modern logistical network were vital to the Chinese before they could proceed with the next phase of their plan.

D. SETTING THE STAGE FOR REFORM

While road construction continued at a frenetic pace, other changes began to emerge within Tibet. In 1952, the Chinese took two significant steps to help them integrate Tibet into China. “First, they divided Tibet into three separate administrative zones and in so doing established a strong, separate military area in Tibet” (McCarthy, p. 71). This first action placed the central and western portions of Tibet under the administration of the Dalai Lama. Next, the area of Shigatse was placed under the

administration of the Panchen Lama. Lastly, the eastern region of Tibet was placed under the control of a Chinese military commander. By dividing Tibet in this manner, the Chinese established a secure position for themselves within Tibet, and kept the remainder of Tibet from being unified under the administration of the Dalai Lama. Once again, the concept of pitting the Dalai and Panchen Lamas against each other was being planned into the Chinese strategy.

The next step presented Tibet with a historical challenge. “Second, the Chinese began to open up Tibet – but only to China. It no longer remained the Forbidden Land” (p. 71). The Chinese accomplished this feat through the construction of the aforementioned roads, as well as airfields. In addition, Tibetan children were taken out of Tibet, educated in China, and then returned to Tibet after they had been appropriately indoctrinated with the benefits of Communism. Another way found to increase the strength of Communism in Tibet was to establish a Tibetan branch of the Chinese Communist Party. Two more measures that further opened up Tibet were the introduction of new agricultural techniques and the initiation of Chinese migration to Tibet.

Then, in 1954, Tibet’s isolation from the rest of the world was reinforced when India concluded trade negotiations with China regarding Tibet. As a result of the negotiations, India, according to Neville Maxwell (1970):

Unequivocally recognized China’s sovereignty in Tibet – referring to the latter as ‘the Tibetan region of China’ – and thus formally buried the attempt, started by the British and carried on tentatively by India immediately after independence, to deal with Lhasa as if Tibet were independent. (p. 79)

Thereafter, with the direct actions taken by the Chinese in 1952 and India’s negotiations in 1954, Tibet became more tightly bound to China, and even more isolated than before from the rest of the world. There was only one obstacle remaining prior to commencing the hardcore reforms, but that was about to be overcome.

By the spring of 1955, the last of the prerequisites was complete. “The road leading from Kham to Lhasa was fully finished. A second route from Amdo to the capital was also complete” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 25). With the completion of these

roads, Tibet was physically and politically controllable by the Chinese. Now China could move ahead with its plans with little to fear from either the Tibetans or the international community. As a consequence, Chinese policy in Tibet underwent a radical shift; the first target of this new approach was the Tibetan political system.

In 1955, the Chinese began to develop the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region (PCTAR) “which, while purporting to guarantee Tibetan representation, actually secured Chinese control over all governing institutions in Tibet” (Smith, p. 382). The Committee consisted of a majority of Tibetans (only five of the originally planned 51 members were Chinese) who came from the three separate zones of Tibet, and the Dalai Lama was made the chairman. On the surface, one would think the Tibetans would have a great deal of power in the PCTAR, but upon further inspection, it becomes clear the Chinese were in control because the PCTAR was not allowed to operate independently. Instead, the PCTAR had to work through the PRC State Council, located in Peking, in a process Smith detailed as follows:

The Preparatory Committee had to secure approval for all its actions and to refer to the State Council any administrative question upon which it was unable to render a unanimous decision, a provision that allowed the Chinese members or their collaborators to withdraw any measure from the deliberation of the Committee in favor of its resolution by Peking. (p. 383)

Thus, even though the Tibetans formed the vast majority of the Committee, they were powerless because a unanimous vote was required to pass any act. Needless to say, the only time unanimity would be achieved is when the measure favored the Chinese position. Otherwise, the Chinese would have the issue referred to Peking where, naturally, it would be resolved in a manner favorable to the Chinese PCTAR members.

With the formation of the PCTAR, the Tibetans lost all influence, and any independent input, into the governance of Tibet. One thing was now abundantly clear to the Tibetans: “China intended only to exploit Tibet, not to assist or to advance her” (McCarthy, p. 95). Unfortunately for the Tibetans, this realization came too late.

E. REFORMS

With the circumvention of the Tibetan government complete, Mao was able to introduce his “High Tide of Socialist Transformation” which consisted of two major

components. First, there were Democratic reforms comprising such areas as land redistribution, suppression of landlords, and initiation of class labels. Second, came socialist transformation which began with cooperativization, and concluded with full collectivization (Smith, p. 387). However, it is important to note that initially these measures did not take place throughout Tibet. They were instituted only in the eastern-most portions of Tibet, Kham and Amdo, which were under direct Chinese military control.

The Tibetans were terribly upset with the reforms because none of the actions benefited the Tibetans as they were supposedly designed to do. For instance, redistribution of land meant that the best Tibetan land was distributed to the Chinese while the poorer plots were allocated to the Tibetans. Additionally, many of the major landholders in Tibet were the monasteries, so when this land was seized by the Chinese, the monasteries lost their source of subsistence. As a result, numerous monasteries saw their members depart in search of another source of food with which to guarantee their survival. Next, China's deliberate establishment of class divisions in Tibet turned Tibetans against each other, and redirected some attention away from the Chinese oppressors. Here again, the establishment of class divisions was a way for the Chinese to cause internal dissension where once there had been none.

The next stage, socialist transformation, was even more difficult for the Tibetans to bear. Upon initiation of this measure, the concept of personal property disappeared. Tibetans were forced to work land that was not their own, and to give most of the resulting crop yield to the Chinese while maintaining barely enough to keep them alive. As upsetting as these conditions were, it was the final action taken by the Chinese that proved too much for the Tibetans to tolerate:

The serious mistake by the Chinese had been the decision to collect the weapons from the tribals and from the rural monasteries. This act was resented far more by the Tibetans than the increased 'taxes' and seizing of private property by the Chinese. (McCarthy, p. 100)

Why, after all the privations suffered by the Tibetans, did the confiscation of private weapons finally raise their ire to the point where they would decide to start using violence against the Chinese occupiers? The most obvious explanation is that Tibetan

men associated their manhood and sense of family identity with their guns. Tibetan men were taught to fire weapons as young children, and often times, their personal rifle was a family heirloom that had been passed down to them upon reaching manhood. By taking away his weapon, the Chinese stripped Tibetan manhood and the last vestiges of a man's sense of family identity from him. A Tibetan was then left with nothing that he could honestly call his own, and more importantly, nothing to hand down to his son. All family tradition would thus end.

Furthermore, without a gun, a man could no longer provide meat for his family, and it would become exceedingly difficult to maintain his nomadic existence. Consequently, he and his family would be forced to seek work on a collective farm, and lose their highly cherished independent livelihood. Such a bleak future was intolerable to the Khampas and Amdowas. McCarthy sums up this point quite nicely. "The haughty Chinese did not understand that the Tibetans, especially the proud and independent and fiercely loyal tribal groups, were not going to become slaves to the invaders" (p. 102). The Chinese had gone too far, and were about to discover the consequences of their actions.

F. REVOLT

Before delving into the insurrection, it is necessary to answer one question. How could the Tibetans conduct acts of violence when their entire religion, Buddhism, was committed to nonviolence? To obtain a succinct, but insightful answer we turn to a comment made by one of the guerrilla leaders, Ratu Ngawang, in a film produced for BBC Television (1998). "Communist Chinese are enemies of Buddhism. So since they were enemies of Buddhism we never felt it was a sin to kill them." Additionally, the Tibetans felt they had exhausted all other options available to them, including waiting for the concurrence of the Dalai Lama, the man whom they were ultimately trying to defend:

The resistance was ... delayed for an extended period only because of the repeated requests by the Dalai Lama for patience while a way to accommodate the Chinese could be found but finally pursued when it was obvious to the various tribal leaders that no such accommodation was possible. (McCarthy, p. 109).

By thus justifying violent action as the last option available against people who were the enemies of Buddhism, the Khampas and Amdowas were able to begin venting their pent-up anger against the Chinese.

Resistance began in 1956 with numerous small bands of Tibetan horsemen attacking the Chinese. “The first incident of open rebellion occurred in early spring 1956, when an undetermined number of Goloks massacred a Chinese Communist garrison at the town of Dzachuka” (Knaus, p. 129). These attacks, repeated numerous times, seemingly came out of nowhere with the Tibetans quickly overrunning and destroying the garrison. Then, as quickly as the Tibetans appeared, they would disappear before reinforcements could arrive. Since the Chinese always arrived too late to engage the Tibetans, a new tactic was devised and implemented:

The Chinese were using artillery and bomber aircraft, not only against the guerrillas when they could find them, but also against the villages and monasteries whose people they suspected, rightly or wrongly, of having helped them. Thus villages and monasteries were being totally destroyed. Lamas and lay leaders of the people were being humiliated, imprisoned, killed, and even tortured. (Smith, p. 421)

Invariably, as a consequence of these reprisals, the Chinese generated even more enemies who rallied to the expanding Tibetan cause.

However, even with this increase in recruits for the various Tibetan resistance groups, there was still a fundamental flaw hampering the Tibetan effort. “A great many people expressed their readiness to fight the Chinese, but they were doing it for the defence [sic] of their locality, their monasteries, and their lamas. The Khampas did not have a shared concept of fighting for a country” (Shakya, 1999, p. 173). The Khampas were working towards personal ends, and did not coordinate with each other to maximize the impact of their actions on the Chinese. Due to this lack of Tibetan coordination, the Chinese were annoyed and suffered some real damage in the Tibetan raids, but their position in Tibet was not jeopardized.

Then to further complicate the issue, the tactics the Tibetans employed against the Chinese were not appropriate for a guerrilla war. “Exuding little that was unconventional, the Tibetan guerrillas were consistently fighting in large concentrations,

planning overly complex maneuvers, and failing to milk the advantage of their superior knowledge of the local terrain” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 99). It would take the formation of a nationwide resistance movement and outside support to threaten the Chinese position in Tibet. The establishment of a nationwide insurgency was still in the future, but the outside support appeared when the United States once again expressed interest in the plight of Tibet.

G. THE U.S. ENTERS THE FRAY

The stage was set for U.S. involvement in Tibet by the actions of one man sitting in his office in Washington, D.C. “In December 1955 President Eisenhower authorised [sic] the CIA to develop secret activities to undermine ‘international communism,’ which resulted in the establishment of underground, resistance and guerrilla groups” (Shakya, p. 170). It was once he saw resistance erupting in Tibet, that Eisenhower recognized that a golden opportunity was presenting itself, by which the US could do something to complicate China’s incorporation of Tibet into China. This was not an opportunity to be missed, and so operations began.

Initially the U.S. attempted to work through the Dalai Lama in its attempts to support the guerrillas, but several problems were encountered. To begin with, Tibet had no modern communications, and in order to communicate with the Dalai Lama, meetings had to be arranged with the Dalai Lama’s representatives in locations outside of Tibet, such as India. Then those representatives had to return to Tibet, relate what had been discussed to the Dalai Lama, and finally relay the Dalai Lama’s decision back to the Americans. Needless to say, even under the best of conditions, this was a slow process, but unfortunately it did not remain unhampered. On arriving in Tibet, the representatives were often forced to relay the information to the Dalai Lama’s advisors, and invariably, those advisors would decide not to pass the information on to the Dalai Lama himself.

One reason given for why his advisors refused to pass along the U.S. request that the Dalai Lama officially endorse of the insurrection was that: “You can’t ask him that question. Killing presents a real problem for them” (J. K. Knaus, personal communication, February 11, 2003). Since the Dalai Lama’s life was committed to nonviolence, he could not be asked to simply throw that away. If he made the concession once, where would he draw the line so as not to make it again and again? At the time it

was felt that was territory better left unexplored. As a consequence, the Dalai Lama's advisors never asked the question. Unfortunately, none of this was relayed to the United States representatives, and they patiently waited for a reply from the Dalai Lama. "There was a dogged determination on the part of American intelligence officers to obtain official approval for their activities from the Dalai Lama himself" (Grunfeld, 1987, p. 150) – approval, sadly, that would never come.

H. CHUSHI GANGDRUK

In the meantime, Tibetan guerrilla leaders realized that if they wanted to force the Chinese out of Tibet they would have to organize a national resistance movement. The man who thought he could accomplish such a daunting task, Gompo Tashi Andrugsang, earnestly began forming his organization. Gompo began forming the Chushi Gangdruk (whose name is derived from the eastern region of Tibet known in English as Four Rivers, Six Ranges) in late 1956 and early 1957 in an effort to establish a national resistance movement that was based in central Tibet. With such an organization, all Tibetans could identify with the movement instead of just the Khampas and Amdowas of the eastern areas, and the resistance movement would become more than just a regional concern. Gompo, it turns out, was particularly suited to this task. He was a trader whose family was known for supporting Tibetan religion and institutions. Also, as a trader, he had earned a considerable fortune with which he could purchase supplies and weapons for his men, and he was extremely familiar with the terrain and people throughout Tibet. Finally, Gompo maintained a good reputation with the leaders of Tibet loyal to the Dalai Lama (Knaus, p. 142).

However, as qualified as Gompo appeared for the task, he still faced several challenges in forming a national resistance movement. His influence among local chieftains in Kham was marginal. The chieftains regarded Gompo as an advocate of modernization, and as a consequence, a threat to the chieftains' traditional way of life. Additionally, the chieftains saw Gompo as socially inferior and a newcomer to the resistance they had been waging for some time (Knaus, p. 143). But despite these concerns, as the guerrillas of eastern Tibet were pushed progressively closer to Lhasa by the Chinese, they recognized the influence Gompo had with the Lhasan government, and

reluctantly joined his organization. A truly nationwide resistance movement was finally starting to take shape in Tibet, and the United States continued to watch with interest.

Indeed, given these indigenous efforts, the Americans decided to change their approach. The United States “now sought to establish covert activities, with or without the Dalai Lama’s blessing” (Shakya, p. 171). The decision was made to support the Chushi Gangdruk as much as possible, and the CIA was placed in charge of what came to be known as Operation ST CIRCUS.

I. OPERATION ST CIRCUS

Operation ST CIRCUS (the “ST” comes from the two-letter identifier used for Tibet) was comprised of two major components. The first was the airdropping of arms, ammunition, and supplies to the Tibetans in Tibet, codenamed ST BARNUM, in order to provide Tibetans the physical means with which to fight the Chinese. The other half of the mission consisted of training Tibetan refugees in guerrilla warfare so that they would be better prepared to fight the Chinese, and then returning them to Tibet so that they could put their new skills to work.

The operation got under way in 1957 when an initial group of six Khampas was “exfiltrated from India and flown from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) to Saipan, where they were trained by a few selected CIA officers for four and a half months” (McCarthy, p. 240). While in Saipan, the Tibetans were trained in “OSS-type sabotage techniques, demolition, and most importantly, code-and-cipher work for radio operators” (Roberts, 1997, pp. 33-34). Once training was complete, preparations were made to insert the Tibetans back into Tibet so that they could link up with the guerrillas in Tibet, and provide their CIA handlers with current information as to what was happening there. This last task was crucial because, at the time, there were no direct communications possible between people in Tibet and the United States.

The decision was made to airdrop the Khampas back into Tibet using the CIA-operated airline Civil Air Transport (CAT), from a staging base located at Kermitola in East Pakistan. However, before the Tibetans could be dropped, they had to complete a condensed version of parachute training in Okinawa to teach them this new skill. Finally,

with all training complete, the Tibetans were transported to their staging base, and the last details finalized. Here, though, the preparations took an interesting twist.

Despite the fact the United States wanted to help the Tibetans in their struggle against the Chinese, the U.S. worked to maintain plausible deniability on this first flight, and went to great lengths to do so. “Before the Khampas were dropped back into Tibet their clothes and equipment were carefully searched to dispose of any markings that may have identified them with the United States. Even the labels of their medicine bottles were removed” (Grunfeld, p. 152). Steps were also taken to ensure the aircraft, a World War II vintage B-17, could not be traced back to the United States. “The unmarked aircraft was flown by Polish and Czech expatriates” (Leary, 1997/1998, p. 64). There was nothing to identify the aircraft, crew, or passengers with the United States in the event the aircraft crashed, but luckily the mission, launched in September 1957, went as planned. After the success of this first mission, another similar flight was planned for November to insert the next Tibetan guerrilla team. This mission also went smoothly, and both teams rapidly established contact with the guerrillas, and advised the CIA of the situation on the ground. Before long, as to be expected, the Tibetans began to request supply drops.

With the insertion of the guerrilla teams and the subsequent hookup with the resistance groups, the CIA was now ready to initiate drops of arms, ammunition, and supplies to the insurgents as requested. The first of these arms drops was conducted in July 1958 by a C-118 and consisted of “100 British-made rifles, 20 sub-machine guns, two 55mm mortars, 60 hand grenades, and 300 rounds of ammunition for each weapon” (Grunfeld, p. 150). Although once again successful, the CAT crews felt uneasy flying the C-118 into Tibet because it had limited power and “had limited altitude capability, forcing the pilots to weave their way through the high Himalayas rather than fly over them” (Leary, p. 66). In addition, the aircraft was flying at the outermost limit of its endurance, and had to land to refuel before it could complete the return flight. Finally, the payload of the C-118 was rather limited, which meant numerous, hazardous sorties would have to be flown to provide substantial assistance to the Tibetans. This was far from an ideal situation for the CAT crews, but the situation improved once the Eisenhower administration approved a major expansion of the operation in 1959, and the

airdrops were flown using the new C-130 transport aircraft. Overall then, with the insertion of the first few personnel and the establishment of a flow of supplies, the United States demonstrated its commitment to the Tibetans, enabling the CIA-trained men to concentrate more fully on their mission:

The activities were divided into two: one was to take place largely in the north near Lake Koko Nor, designed to sabotage roads and gather information...; while the other operation was to take place in the south, designed to keep the Khampas supplied in order to preserve them as a fighting force in selected areas of Tibet. (Grunfeld, p. 152).

In addition to the aforementioned aircraft improvements, Operation ST CIRCUS underwent training enhancements. In early 1958, the CIA opened up Camp Hale in Colorado as a new training location for the Tibetans. Camp Hale was chosen because, at over 10,000 feet, it was the closest the U.S. could get to matching the elevations found in Tibet. The existing training program was also:

Expanded to include a variety of psychological warfare techniques, survival courses, extensive field exercises, driver training (jeep, trucks, tank) use of snow shoes, field expedients, making and firing of simple, short range incendiary rockets, multiple ambushes, diversionary tactics, etc. (McCarthy, p. 243)

As the U.S. was increasing its covert commitment to the Tibetans, it paradoxically, remained largely inactive on the diplomatic front – at least until the Dalai Lama entered exile in India.

In June 1958, the Tibetans changed the name of the resistance movement from Chushi Gangdruk to the National Volunteer Defense Army (NVDA). This name change was significant because ‘Chushi Gangdruk’ had always suggested a regional bias despite Gompo’s insistence that it was a national resistance. The name had caused resentment and suspicion of the organization, and the establishment of the NVDA helped assuage those concerns. In addition to the formation of the NVDA, the resistance itself was starting to make its effects felt.

The Chinese were under great pressure from the Khampas, who moved freely by keeping to the mountains and moving rapidly on horseback. Most of the remote areas, stretching from Chamdo in the east to the

borders of India in the South, were under the control of the Khampa resistance groups. (Shakya, p. 179)

Toward the end of the 1950s, the insurgency began to shift towards central Tibet. The actions of the Tibetan insurgents had already destabilized the area, and now the Tibetans found themselves increasingly in charge which, according to McCarthy, shocked the Chinese:

Strangely, most of the Chinese, especially their military officers and party cadres in Lhasa, did not seem to believe that the Tibetans would actually undertake armed resistance, or that if they did, they were certain the Tibetans could not combat the Chinese might beyond a very few days at most. (Grunfeld, pp. 137-138)

Yet far from presenting merely token resistance, the Tibetan insurgents proved to be a formidable foe. To crush the insurgency once and for all, the Chinese were about to go after the Tibetans with a vengeance

J. CHINESE RETALIATION

The Chinese began to methodically search for and destroy the elusive Tibetans using their far superior technology. Two of the most significant items in China's technological arsenal were aircraft and tactical radio communications, both of which the Tibetans lacked. The effect of aircraft and radio communications was impressive. "The planes could spot and report groups that looked suspicious. ... It was then simply a matter of the Chinese sending scouting parties of their own ... and then pinpointing the main body of resistance forces" (McCarthy, p. 160). Given the stark nature of the Tibetan countryside, the insurgents had nowhere to hide from the patrolling aircraft. Additionally, since the guerrillas traveled with their families and animals instead of operating in fighter-only groups, this cumbersome mass was large and extremely slow moving. The Tibetans did not stand a chance of escaping from the Chinese once spotted.

Thus, group after group of resistance fighters was wiped out by the Chinese despite advice given to the Tibetans by their CIA contacts, such as: "Scatter. Disperse. You are sitting ducks" (J. K. Knaus, personal communication, February 11, 2003). The Tibetans would not comply. They could not leave their families and herds behind because, once again in the words of Mr. Knaus, "It was their way of life." Therefore, regardless of how unsound the practice of moving en masse was, the Tibetans could not

be convinced to change their ways, and were slaughtered by the thousands in relentless Chinese attacks.

As Gompo's forces dwindled, he finally realized he had little choice but to change his tactics. "He moved south in Kham to reorganize the resistance movement into small guerrilla units that would concentrate on cutting the road and other communications of the occupying forces with China proper" (Knaus, pp. 160-161). With their successes in the east, meanwhile, the Chinese decided it was time to strike at the heart of Tibetan society by going after the Dalai Lama.

K. THE DALAI LAMA ENTERS EXILE

By early 1959, despite the Chinese attacks, the guerrillas were still in control of large portions of central Tibet and the Chinese position remained threatened. Additional measures were required, and the Chinese turned their attention towards Lhasa. In March 1959, the Dalai Lama received an offer from the Chinese to attend a theatrical performance at a Chinese military camp located just outside of Lhasa, though he was also told he would not be allowed to travel with his usual armed guard. Word of this offer leaked to the people of Lhasa, and they believed this was a plot to kidnap the Dalai Lama. As a consequence, the people poured into the grounds of the Norbulingka palace in Lhasa, where the Dalai Lama was staying, to keep him from attending the performance. These actions infuriated the Chinese commander who felt the Dalai Lama was purposely avoiding his appointment at the military camp.

Now the Dalai Lama was trapped. He knew that the patience of the Chinese would soon expire, and military action would be taken in which the people guarding him would be killed. Therefore, the Dalai Lama decided to make one final attempt on the 17th to send a message to the Chinese explaining that he was trying to peacefully disperse the crowds before going to the camp in order to prevent potential bloodshed. However, before he received a written reply, two mortar rounds landed near the Norbulingka grounds "with the stated purpose of 'freeing' the Dalai Lama from the 'reactionary clique' surrounding his residence" (Powers, p. 175). Time was up.

In order to spare his people, the Dalai Lama decided to flee the Norbulingka. That night, disguised as an ordinary soldier, the Dalai Lama passed through the crowd

undetected, met up with some guerrillas, his family, and other members of his entourage, and started his trek towards India and exile. Simultaneously, the NVDA “created a decoy northeast of Lhasa to confuse Chinese searchers” (Prados, p. 161) though the Chinese actually remained unaware that the Dalai Lama had left the Norbulingka.

Then, during the pre-dawn hours of 20 March, believing the Dalai Lama was still inside the Norbulingka, the Chinese began their assault in earnest. “It was the sound that they had all been dreading – ‘first one shell, then more, followed by too many to count” (Hopkirk, 1982, p. 257). The Chinese continued the barrage until dawn and then momentarily ceased fire. A couple of hours later, the Chinese renewed the bombardment which caused fierce resistance to erupt throughout the city, but the Tibetans, armed mostly with sticks and stones, were no match for the modern Chinese weapons. The Chinese ruthlessly crushed all resistance, and left thousands dead. By 23 March the fighting was finished, and the Chinese discovered that the Dalai Lama was nowhere to be found. He had escaped from them once again, just as he had in 1950 when he fled to Yatung. The Chinese immediately launched patrols to locate him, but to no avail.

Even though the Dalai Lama successfully eluded the Chinese, the news for China was not all bad. With his departure, the last barrier facing Chinese expansionism had been removed, and on 28 March the Chinese made a radio broadcast in which they proclaimed “that the Tibetan government had been dissolved and China had taken direct control” (Powers, p. 175). By “direct control,” the Chinese included the following details: the 17-Point Agreement was dissolved, but that was of little consequence because most of the provisions had already been violated; Kham and Amdo were officially removed from Tibet and respectively incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Sichuan and Qinghai; the Panchen Lama was made the official leader of Tibet. And this was just the beginning of the changes about to engulf Tibet. The most brutal phase of Chinese occupation was yet to begin – and will be examined in-depth in Chapter V. For now let us finish off by briefly returning to the Dalai Lama’s entry into exile.

The Dalai Lama reached India on the 31st of March, where he was granted asylum by the Indian government, and “publicly denounced the Seventeen-Point Agreement and declared: ‘Wherever I am, accompanied by my government, the Tibetan people

recognize us as the Government of Tibet” (van Walt van Praag, p. 163). With these words, the Dalai Lama professed to the world that he would not give in to the Chinese. At the same time, the Dalai Lama was signaling his readiness to start the next phase of his campaign seeking Tibet’s independence.

IV. THE INSURGENCY CONTINUES: ZENITH AND COLLAPSE (1959-1974)

A. THE CHINESE RESPONSE

Once the Dalai Lama escaped his pursuers, and entered exile in India, the Chinese attempted to make it appear as if he had been captured and transported to India against his will. To add credence to their fabrication, the Chinese enlisted the aid of the Panchen Lama to dispute the Dalai Lama's statement denying Chinese rule over Tibet.

The Panchen Lama was 'greatly incensed,' he said, at the Dalai Lama's statement, which was obviously 'imposed on him by foreigners.' Tibet was an 'inalienable part of Chinese territory,' he held, 'which nobody can deny.' ... That Tibetans had any 'strong desire for independence,' as the Dalai Lama had claimed, was 'completely fabrications [sic].' (Smith, p. 464)

Here again we see the Chinese skillfully manipulating the Panchen Lama, but this time, to support their explanation of why the Dalai Lama had suddenly arrived in India. With so many inconsistent stories, although the outside world might not believe what the Chinese and the Panchen Lama were saying, there was a good chance that Tibetans would believe the man who was the second most powerful Tibetan – and with the departure of the Dalai Lama, the most powerful Tibetan still in Tibet.

However, the Chinese did not merely rely on the Panchen Lama to corroborate their story of the Dalai Lama's abduction. The Chinese understood that Tibetans might view the Panchen Lama as pro-China, therefore further proof was required. To strengthen their argument, the Chinese called upon Ngawang Jigme Ngapo (a confidant of the Dalai Lama and member of the Tibetan delegation that negotiated the 17-Point Agreement) to further their allegations of foul play. Ngapo claimed:

In the past eight years, neither from his public statements, nor from his intimate talks with us government officials, did we ever hear anything about 'the independence of Tibet' or the sundering of the unity of the motherland. What we heard was that he cared deeply not only for the happiness of the Tibetan people, but also for the consolidation and strengthening of the unity of the motherland. Therefore we can categorically affirm that the statement issued in India in the name of the

Dalai Lama definitely does not conform to the will of the Dalai Lama himself. (p. 465)

In this manner, the Chinese established the “real reason” for the Dalai Lama’s sudden disappearance from Tibet, and supported it with proof from men who knew the Dalai Lama best. The only question remaining was whether the international community would accept China’s version of recent events, or believe and support what the Dalai Lama claimed. The Chinese did not have long to wait, and disliked the verdict.

B. THE UN ACTS

The international community did not accept China’s story, but strangely, neither did it back up its convictions by quickly condemning China’s crushing of the Tibetan revolt in Lhasa. Someone needed to take charge, and champion the Tibetan cause at the UN before it was forgotten. Given that the Dalai Lama was living in India, one might naturally expect India to aid the Tibetans, but this did not happen. It seems that the Chinese, too, thought India would act, so they attempted to browbeat their Indian neighbors into submission. The Chinese claimed that the Indians participated in the conspiracy to kidnap the Dalai Lama, and the only way to prove their innocence was to turn the Dalai Lama over to the Chinese authorities. Fortunately for the Dalai Lama, India refused to hand him over to China.

However, India’s timid response to the Chinese accusation and lack of anger regarding the revolt in Lhasa were far from encouraging for the Dalai Lama. India’s response, delivered by Nehru to the Indian Parliament on the 27th of April, equivocated this way:

We have no desire whatever to interfere in Tibet; we have every desire to maintain the friendship between India and China; but at the same time we have every sympathy for the people of Tibet, and we are greatly distressed at their hapless plight. (p. 467)

With this address, Nehru clearly indicated that he felt sorry for the Tibetans, but that he had no intention of helping them. He was more concerned with maintaining friendly relations with China, and would not even condemn China’s brutal behavior during the revolt. The Tibetans had to look elsewhere for their savior.

The next choice to back the UN resolution was the country which had always been the strongest proponent of Tibetan independence: Great Britain. Surely she would come to the Dalai Lama's aid in this time of crisis. Nevertheless, despite strong historic ties with Tibet, British support also proved lackluster as they "danced around the issue throughout the summer by questioning whether Tibet qualified as a 'state' entitled to a hearing at the United Nations" (Knaus, p. 189). Once again, the Dalai Lama was denied the assistance he so desperately needed in order to have his government-in-exile officially recognized.

The Dalai Lama was rapidly running out of options, but all hope was not yet lost. The United States, which was covertly training Tibetan guerrillas and airdropping supplies into Tibet, considered taking action at the UN on behalf of the Dalai Lama, but had to be careful. President Eisenhower did not want the Tibetan cause to be interpreted by the rest of the world as a U.S. extension of the Cold War. Therefore, if the United States was to seriously consider backing a government-in-exile, there would first have to be wider support for such an initiative. India and Great Britain had already shown their unwillingness, which diminished U.S. hopes, but if other countries expressed interest, there was still a chance. The U.S. focused its attention on the rest of the international community to see if there would be broad based support for raising the issue before the UN. Here too, though, support was unobtainable. Consequently, there never was a UN attempt to recognize the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile. However, the United States was still not quite willing to give up on the Tibetans completely. If a government-in-exile was out of the question, maybe a resolution based on the violation of human rights would work.

In the summer of 1959, the Americans reengaged the Tibetan issue from this new perspective. The first step was to try to convince the Dalai Lama that this was the best path to pursue in order to keep the plight of the Tibetans alive in the international arena. The U.S. government relayed the following method, to be used when dealing with the Dalai Lama, to the U.S. embassy in India:

The embassy was instructed to urge the Dalai Lama to appeal while the issue was alive and to do so in terms of suffering and denial of human rights, which UN members would find easier to support than charges of

aggression. This would avoid frightening off potential supporters who might be uncertain about Tibet's legal status or unwilling to confront the Chinese Communists directly. (p. 194)

This describes, in broad terms, the types of countries that might not support the Dalai Lama unless he adopted the human rights stance, but clearly referred to Great Britain and India. However explicit this insinuation was, it should be noted that there were certainly other countries expressing similar sentiments. After receiving this advice, the Dalai Lama reluctantly acquiesced, and the United States pushed forward with its plan to gain support for a human rights resolution.

The Chinese, seeing what was going on, were incensed with the continued attempts to generate and pass a resolution, and voiced their displeasure. "No interference by any foreign country or by the United Nations under whatever pretext or in whatever form will be tolerated. ... Any question concerning Tibet can only be settled by China and in China, and not in any foreign country" (Smith, p. 469). Despite continued Chinese protests, the battle for a resolution continued, and soon the General Assembly debated "The Question of Tibet", with the following results:

On October 21, after two days of debate, the General Assembly voted 45 to 9, with 26 abstentions, to approve a resolution that noted 'that the fundamental human rights and freedoms to which the Tibetan people, like all others, are entitled include the right to civil and religious liberty for all without distinction.' It also noted Tibet's cultural and religious heritage and its traditional autonomy, expressed 'grave concern at reports ... that the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet have been forcibly denied them,' and deplored 'the effect of these events in increasing international tensions.' The resolution made no mention of who was depriving the Tibetans of their rights or of their independence. ... These omissions and evasions had been carefully and painfully crafted by the Irish after marathon sessions with the other delegations to carry what the traffic would bear. (Knaus, p. 205)

The Dalai Lama finally received the resolution he had been waiting for, but it was far from a resounding triumph. The UN resolution had been so watered down in order to avoid offending anyone that it achieved little, but at least it was a sign that Tibet had not been completely abandoned by the international community. Although actions in the UN provided little concrete assistance to the Dalai Lama, operations from another sector were about to prove more productive.

C. THE US STEPS UP ITS EFFORT

At the same time the UN shied away from the Tibetan situation, the United States government took steps to increase its involvement, albeit on a covert level. The first step was successfully accomplished when both houses of Congress agreed that the Tibetan rebellion should be supported by the U.S. Then, with Congress's approval, President Eisenhower was able to unleash the CIA to expand its program.

However, there was still one consideration pending before the CIA could move ahead: was there still a resistance in Tibet *to* support? Without a viable resistance in Tibet, the CIA would be needlessly risking the lives of its trained Tibetans and the aircrews who flew the hazardous missions into Tibet. An accurate assessment had to be made for the sake of all concerned. During the situational review, though, training at Camp Hale was to continue. Meanwhile, in Tibet, the Chinese were doing their utmost to eliminate all remaining resistance, and speed along incorporation.

D. THE CHINESE CRACKDOWN

With the departure of the Dalai Lama, China dropped all pretense of kindness towards the Tibetans. "Soon after dissolving the Tibetan government, the Chinese authorities declared martial law. Any attempts at resistance were met with massive retaliation, the intent of which was to terrorize the populace into submission" (Powers, p. 179). Additionally, the Chinese increased the pace of "democratic reforms" in Tibet, and relentlessly pursued remaining resistance groups. With regard to reforms, China accelerated the confiscation of all private property, required Tibetans to give up Tibetan money (which was shortly declared worthless) in exchange for Chinese *yuan*, and began agricultural collectivization with the formation of Mutual Aid Teams (Smith, p. 472). Tibetans were being systematically stripped of everything that identified them as Tibetan in order to accelerate their incorporation into the Chinese fold.

A favorite Chinese target during this time was Buddhist institutions. China understood that Buddhism was the true foundation of Tibet, and if the Chinese wanted to reform Tibet, religion had to be crushed. "With an almost Cromwellian fury they demolished, sacked or closed down monasteries across the country, confiscating their lands and wealth" (Hopkirk, 1982, p. 260). As evident from this example, nobody was immune from the "democratic reforms" because resistance of any kind could not and

would not be tolerated. Otherwise, Tibetan society would never comply with the changes being thrust upon it.

However, China did not stop its campaign at the institutional level. It also targeted the Tibetan people. To break down the individual Tibetan, the Chinese instituted “study groups” which were designed to help the Tibetans achieve socialist transformation through engagement in mutual criticism. As Smith explains:

The study group broke the bonds of trust within traditional groups such as family and peer groups because pressures to reveal any deviation were so intense that even trusted individuals were forced to inform on others; the usual security within the traditional groups was thus destroyed. (p. 476)

Therefore, not only were the Chinese removing all physical aspects of what it meant to be Tibetan, they were destroying centuries old Tibetan social organization. In the process, the Chinese reduced the Tibetans to malleable objects that lacked a sense of identity. Then, to complete the transformation, the Tibetans were incessantly bombarded with Chinese propaganda to ensure they thought about issues using the correct frame of reference.

As had been anticipated, not all of these fiercely independent individuals were easy to transform, and for the holdouts, there were harsher methods. “Thousands were killed, and thousands more imprisoned and tortured” (Powers, p. 179). To accommodate those imprisoned, and to derive some benefit from the prison population, forced labor camps were established. The Tibetans were used as labor for a myriad of Chinese projects including: construction of railroads, cutting down Tibetan forests, and working on hydroelectric projects. Moreover, the mind of the Tibetan prisoner was subjected to attack in the form of political indoctrination. As Smith relates, this combination of physical and mental stress served its purpose: “The nature of the Chinese prison system was such that only by conformity to the regime was survival possible. Resistance resulted only in death from execution, torture or overwork and starvation” (p. 487). China was ruthless in converting the Tibetan population to the Chinese way of life because she hoped it would facilitate the smooth incorporation of Tibet into China.

For those who refused to submit and managed to still remain free, there was only one option available for voicing their discontent. According to Hopkirk (1982), “They

voted with their feet, trudging hundreds of miles southwards through the Himalayas into exile in India” (p. 260). It was an arduous journey, that required they battle the elements and Chinese border guards along the way, but one that many Tibetans felt was necessary if they ever hoped to achieve some degree of freedom in their lives. There was nothing left of the Tibet they had known and loved, and the realization that the old days would probably never return spurred them onward. It was time to start anew while they still could.

As they accelerated their “democratic reforms,” the Chinese displayed similar vigor on the military front. They quickly extended their pursuit of the remaining rebels once the Dalai Lama was gone. “An additional 100,000 Chinese troops were committed into Tibet in April and May, along with more artillery, motorized transport and air support” (McCarthy, p. 176). The Chinese were ready to focus all their attention on wiping out the last remaining pockets of Tibetan resistance, and they quickly went to work. The PLA, strengthened by the recent influx of men and supplies, launched a massive offensive against the Tibetan resistance fighters, and the results were devastating:

A month of fighting between the Chinese and Tibetan resistance in the south near the Dalai Lama’s route into exile had virtually decimated the guerrillas. Captured Chinese documents estimated that as many as 85,000 Tibetans had been killed in the fighting. Pockets of resistance were short on food, supplies, and hope. Many guerrillas wanted to flee to India. (Roberts, p. 35)

The resistance had been broken up and weakened, but not annihilated. Remnants retreated, all the while looking for cover to protect them from the prying eyes of Chinese aircraft. The Tibetans knew that if they could avoid detection, they would survive and, perhaps later, could reform, and continue the campaign against the Chinese.

While engaged in this nonstop pursuit, the Chinese took an additional step to reduce the chances any remaining rebels would survive. Also in April, China announced “anti-rebellion” reform which:

made it a crime punishable by death for any Tibetan to assist or participate in any way in the resistance. ... The Chinese hoped to cut off all food

supplies, thereby forcing the Volunteers to leave Tibet or be run to ground and killed. (McCarthy, p. 222)

Although this decree probably deterred some Tibetans from aiding the resistance members, there is another, more likely reason why the fleeing guerrillas received little support from the Tibetan population. According to Knaus, “I don’t think they had that much to give” (personal communication, February 11, 2003). Given the fact the Chinese had confiscated all personal property and the best plots of agricultural land, and forced the Tibetans to hand over the majority of their crop yields to the Chinese, the Tibetans were left with little. They barely had enough to ensure their own survival without trying to feed the hungry mouths of Volunteers. Consequently, the guerrillas seldom received anything from the Tibetan population as they retreated across Tibet.

Yet, despite constant harassment from the Chinese and abominable living conditions, these Tibetans refused to give up their freedom. In fact, several men, including Gompo Tashi, managed to reach the safety of India. Once in India, Gompo explained that there were still men in Tibet capable of resisting the Chinese. “He advised that the local resistance forces could conduct ambushes along the Sichuan-Lhasa highway and disrupt traffic along this major supply route for the Chinese army” (Knaus, p. 222). However, such actions would only be possible, in the estimation of Gompo, if the United States provided assistance. Word of this development soon reached Washington, D.C., and Eisenhower concluded that a resistance movement still existed in Tibet. He then decided to resume the CIA’s covert operations in Tibet.

E. ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN

Once the decision was made to resume operations inside Tibet, the CIA began planning its next guerrilla team insertion. Nine men, who had been trained at Camp Hale, were chosen for the mission. They were to be infiltrated in order to convince a suspected resistance group (suspected because no contact had yet been established), located approximately 200 miles northwest of Lhasa, “to attack Chinese trucks transporting borax from the local mines” (p. 223). The team was airdropped at the desired location on 19 September 1959, but that was the only portion of the mission that went according to plan. A traitor in the resistance group had informed the Chinese of the group’s location. The Chinese had subsequently attacked them, and the resistance group had been dispersed.

Therefore, when the CIA-trained men arrived, there was no resistance group to link up with. The team was then forced to make its way to India so that it could explain the mission's failure. This dampened the CIA's initial hopes for success, but also impelled everyone to try to ensure the next mission would prove more rewarding.

The second operation, also executed in September, consisted of 18 CIA-trained guerrillas who had been divided into three teams. These men were airdropped to a spot approximately 200 miles northeast of Lhasa in a region known as Pembar. This time, the resistance group was still intact when the trained guerrillas arrived, so the teams were able to proceed with their missions. The Pembar region was not yet under the full control of the Chinese, and the CIA hoped to use this resistance group to exploit the situation.

Their primary mission was to gain control over the Shotalasum area, of which Pembar is the center. ... By setting up pockets of resistance the guerrillas could establish bases from which they could harass and interdict supply convoys and troop transports, cutting the Chinese supply route to central Tibet and hampering the army's efforts to suppress the rebellion. (p. 224)

Perhaps, if this group could be adequately armed using U.S. supply drops, it could help extend the lifespan of the insurgency, and prevent the Chinese from successfully controlling all Tibetan territory. Two of the teams were assigned to the resistance group and taught it guerrilla tactics, and arranged for airdrops of supplies and weapons. The third team, meanwhile, departed to search for another reported resistance group.

Over the next few months, a series of four airdrops was made to the Tibetans to prepare them for their assigned task. During this buildup phase, the group's location became a fixed site filled with families and animals and, once again, the resistance group disregarded advice, this time from the CIA-trained guerrillas, to disperse. Therefore, when the inevitable Chinese attack came, the familiar pattern repeated itself as the resistance fighters proved to be "more worried about the safety of their families than anything else" (McCarthy, p. 229). The outcome of the Chinese assault was painfully predictable: "By the late spring of 1960 the entire force of fighters, families, and animals had been either killed or scattered" (Knaus, p. 225). Another opportunity to slow down and harass the Chinese in the midst of their Tibetan conquest had been lost, but there was still hope that the third team would be successful.

The third team of Camp Hale graduates had moved to the southern part of Amdo where they, too, found groups of resistance fighters in need of supply. More airdrops were conducted to equip this latest collection of guerrillas once they “agreed to attack convoys on the Qinghai-Lhasa highway” (p. 225). However, just as at Pembar, the camp remained at a fixed location, and rapidly filled with the resistance fighters’ family members and animals. Once the Chinese spotted this newest location, the ensuing attack was swift and merciless. Thus, within a couple of months, this camp met with the same fate as the individuals at Pembar. Again, a chance to thwart China’s plans had slipped away in a hail of Chinese bombs and bullets.

Operational results thus far had been dismal, but there were still scattered bands of guerrillas throughout Tibet, resisting the Chinese, who desperately needed U.S. support. In the opinion of the U.S. government, covert aid had to continue as long as resistance remained. Consequently, on 4 February 1960, “Eisenhower granted his consent for continuation of the Tibet operation” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 134), but soon an event far removed from “the roof of the world” brought all aerial missions over Tibet to a halt.

On 1 May 1960, a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft, piloted by Francis Gary Powers, was shot down over the Soviet Union. Powers survived by ejecting from his aircraft, and was captured by the Soviets. However, the Soviet Union did not release the fact that it had captured Powers. International tension arose when the United States, caught off guard by the mishap, then tried to cover its tracks. At first, the U.S. denied there had been such a mission until the Soviets produced aircraft wreckage and admitted they had Powers. The U.S. had been caught in a lie, and what had been a warming of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States abruptly ceased. In fact, a planned Paris summit between the Russians and Americans was cancelled.

Thus, in order to prevent other incidents from further exacerbating an already volatile situation, President Eisenhower “issue[d] orders for the immediate suspension of all intrusions into the airspace of communist nations. Included in the stand-down were the C-130 flights into Tibet” (Prados, p. 166). Consequently, just as the airdrop missions into Tibet became regularized and the Tibetans grew dependent upon them, the supply

missions abruptly terminated. The CIA attempted to get the flights restarted, but Eisenhower refused to reconsider his decree. The CIA, bombarded by desperate pleas from the Tibetans for further airdrops, could do nothing. Once again, the Tibetans were left to fend for themselves, at least until the next administration came to power.

F. THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION: HOPE AND DISAPPOINTMENT

Included in the briefings given President-elect John F. Kennedy was a CIA briefing on the details of the Tibetan operation. By this time, the Chinese effectively controlled Tibet even though some scattered bands of resistance fighters still remained. Initial preparations were also still underway to establish a guerrilla base outside Tibet in an area known as Mustang (this aspect will be discussed in detail in Section H). On learning this, Kennedy decided he would maintain active support for the Tibetan insurgents once he assumed the presidency. He made his decision official in mid-February 1961 when he gave his permission “to continue the covert Tibet operation started under the previous administration” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 139).

Despite the new president’s support, however, there were still other forces conspiring against the Tibetans. Most notable among these was Kennedy’s choice for U.S. ambassador to India: John Kenneth Galbraith. This ambassadorial position was influential because the Tibetan operation was conducted from the New Delhi embassy. Consequently, the ambassador’s approval was critical if the operation was to succeed. Regretfully, Galbraith had his own agenda. He was “determined to stop some of the ‘spooky activities’ he did not like. One of them was Tibet” (Prados, p. 167). Galbraith made his feelings known to President Kennedy, in a series of cables, but was unsuccessful in halting the covert flights, at least initially. “A final team of seven was dropped to the Markham area of Kham on the western side of the Yangtze in the early spring of 1961” (Knaus, p. 227). As luck would have it, this final mission to Tibet was no more successful than the previous ones had been.

Upon linking up with the local resistance fighters, the CIA-trained men realized they were heavily outnumbered by the Chinese. They had been instructed by the CIA, before departing on the mission, not to make a last stand with the rebels if confronted by hopeless odds. Instead, they were to try and cross the border into India. The decision was made to head for India, but while trying to reach their destination, the CIA-trained

Tibetans were encircled by Chinese troops and attacked. All but one of the guerrillas was killed, and the other taken prisoner. Thus, another mission ended in failure.

Despite this continuing string of failures, there was one remarkable victory that convinced the administration to continue maintaining covert support of the Tibetans. The recently established Mustang operation “scored a genuine success when the Khambas [sic] ambushed a PLA convoy and captured 1,600 pages of valuable documents” (Thomas, 1995, p. 278). This intelligence bonanza provided the United States with a great deal of information concerning China’s problems in Tibet and the difficulties being encountered in China while trying to implement the Great Leap Forward. This was the first time the U.S. was able to assess the true effects of the Great Leap Forward, and more importantly, the Americans no longer had to rely on Great Britain to receive intelligence regarding China. The United States had finally acquired its own reliable intelligence source. Now, there was more reason than ever to continue the Tibetan operation, but Galbraith had not given up his attempts to terminate what he considered to be an extremely risky venture.

By this time, Kennedy had conceded to Galbraith that any “future drops would include the participation of the Indian government” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 166). However, the likelihood of securing this participation was remote given India’s reluctance to do anything to anger China. Additionally, India’s defense minister, Krishna Menon, favored the Soviets and Chinese. It was virtually impossible that the U.S. would receive Indian participation in future airdrops over Tibet. The final act in this drama was played out as Galbraith received the unexpected opportunity he had been waiting for.

In late 1961, the CIA received a frantic request for an immediate airdrop of arms and ammunition from a group of approximately six to eight thousand Tibetan resistance fighters who had been surrounded by the Chinese. The CIA approached Galbraith with the request, and not only did he dismiss consultation with the Indians, he flatly refused to conduct a mission. Thus, deprived of the means to defend themselves, the Tibetans were annihilated (Roberts, pp.35-36). Airdrop operations over Tibet, as well as organized Tibet-based resistance had come to an end. China now held all of Tibet firmly in its grasp. Remnants of guerrilla groups, that had been fleeing the Chinese since 1959,

continued working their way towards the safety of Sikkim and India hoping that they could continue the struggle against China from there. However, before looking at the next phase of the Tibetan insurgency, let us examine in greater detail some of the reasons why CIA operations in Tibet failed.

G. REASONS FOR FAILURE

When examining causes that led to the failure of the Tibet-based phase of the insurgency, one sees that some contributing factors were beyond the influence of the CIA while others could have been eliminated by the CIA or U.S. government. Probably the most critical reason for failure was the refusal of the resistance fighters to fight as true guerrillas. As we have seen, the Tibetans established camps that quickly became fixed sites. Worse, these camps were inhabited by fighters, their families, and herds of livestock instead of just fighters. Also, the camps were located in areas where concealment was unavailable. Consequently, Chinese aircraft were able to easily identify resistance camps, and then direct forces to the area.

Once PLA units arrived, they attacked the Tibetans. Yet, in the midst of battle, the guerrillas were so concerned about saving their families and animals that they did not try to escape even after realizing that they were going to lose. Thus, by repeating this search and destroy process, China found it relatively easy to systematically wipe out each of these fixed sites of resistance. Clearly, the Tibetans' refusal to scatter, contrary to advice from their CIA-trained Tibetan counterparts, was beyond the direct control of the CIA. The men who had been properly trained in guerrilla warfare at Camp Hale did all they could in passing this sage tactical advice on to their countrymen, but the resistance fighters chose not to heed them.

Another factor that contributed to the resistance's failure can be more easily blamed on the United States. Unlike the Chinese who had excellent communications capabilities between forces, the Tibetans lacked modern communications. They thus had no quick way to contact or maintain coordination with other resistance groups operating in the various portions of Tibet. The Tibetans "usually had to rely on couriers on horseback or signal mirrors to communicate with other units" (McCarthy, p. 248). Furthermore, lack of modern communications meant that only groups that had some radio-carrying, CIA-trained guerrillas with them had any hope of receiving supply drops.

Needless to say, the number of resistance groups that had CIA-trained men with them constituted only a small proportion of the total number of resistance groups in Tibet. This problem could have been minimized by the CIA, but the needed radios were purposely denied the Tibetans. “The equipment was withheld lest the Chinese monitor the transmissions; the CIA believed the Tibetans would not observe proper communications security” (Knaus, p. 234). Consequently, the Tibetans were unable to communicate among themselves for the purposes of coordinating attacks against the Chinese, or to assist groups when they came under attack. This, unfortunately, left the resistance a collection of groups isolated from each other; it never became a unified movement.

Again, the lack of radios also meant a resistance group could not initiate contact with the United States. The group thus had to wait to be, first, discovered by the U.S., and second, directly contacted by CIA-trained guerrillas. Many of the resistance groups scattered throughout Tibet ran out of time before being contacted, and were wiped out by the Chinese. In the end, one could conclude that these Tibetan groups never had a chance because they lacked the means to ask for assistance when they needed it most.

A final hindrance to the Tibetan cause, and one that is inherent in the U.S. government’s structure, was to continue to affect the Tibetans even after the move to Mustang. “The bureaucratic delays in getting policy approval to assist the Tibetan resistance also seriously impacted the program” (McCarthy, p. 244). There were so many steps that had to be accomplished in order to carry out even the smallest action regarding Tibet that nothing was done rapidly. Besides, with individuals such as Galbraith opposing the operation, there were continual unforeseen obstacles to contend with.

From this perspective, delivering a steady stream of supplies to the Tibetans was an unrealistic expectation from the beginning. At best, the United States could provide intermittent shipments on those occasions when international politics, domestic politics, or communications difficulties did not hamper Operation ST BARNUM. Regrettably, the meshing of these preconditions did not happen often, but perhaps that would change with the base at Mustang.

H. MUSTANG OPERATIONS

In late 1959, as the Tibetans reeled from China's relentless pursuit of the remaining resistance groups, a new location from which guerrilla operations could be launched was sought once Gompo Tashi told U.S. representatives that the Tibetans were still willing to resist the Chinese. Gompo suggested using a portion of Nepal known as Mustang. But before agreeing, the CIA needed to check out Mustang's qualifications itself. The United States understood that infiltrating CIA-trained guerrillas by parachute was an extremely hazardous and inefficient way to conduct the operation, and recognized that it would be better if guerrillas could be inserted by other means. Thus, it was paramount to find a location from which airborne infiltration would not be required. "Given Nehru's continued desire to refrain from provoking the Chinese leadership, use of India ... was out of the question. Similarly, Bhutan and Sikkim were too firmly under India's thumb to consider their territory as a host for a significant paramilitary endeavour [sic]" (Conboy & Morrison, p. 145). The elimination of these possibilities reduced the choices to one: Nepal.

However, where in Nepal also required care. Nepal was ruled by King Birendra, and it could prove difficult to persuade him to allow the establishment of a guerrilla base in his country. Luckily for the United States, though, there was a place in the kingdom where he did not exert his full authority, and that was located in Mustang. This particular region differed from other parts of Nepal because it jutted into the southern portion of Tibet, and its inhabitants were Buddhists of Tibetan descent. That Mustang was more Tibetan than Nepalese led to another fortunate coincidence. "Even when Kathmandu insisted on the disbandment of other royal fiefdoms within its borders, Mustang alone was allowed to keep its king ... [and] enjoyed near complete leeway in running its own affairs" (p. 146). Consequently, the U.S. would not have to gain the approval of the Nepalese king before establishing operations. All that was required was to secure acceptance from the king of Mustang, and this proved to be a simple affair.

Some other advantages in using Mustang were:

The border between Mustang and Tibet did not have any high passes blocked by snow in winter ... [and] there was a handful of valleys with enough tree cover to camouflage a guerrilla encampment during the

summer. ... [I]ts remote location kept it out of range of foreign visitors.
(p. 146)

As Mustang came to look better and better, there was one more detail that further convinced the United States to choose it as the site for staging clandestine operations into Tibet. “The location was ideal for secret military operations because it lay south of the main road connecting Tibet and Xinjiang, one of the two routes linking Tibet with China” (Shakya, p. 283). In fact, all together Mustang appeared to have more advantages than one could reasonably expect to find in an otherwise austere environment.

The first order of business in building a base was to select a leader. This task was left to Gompo Tashi who chose one of his lieutenants, Gyen Yeshe, as Mustang’s guerrilla chief. With so much riding on this choice, one would think that the decision was made after considering numerous factors, but that is incorrect. In fact, Gyen Yeshe was made the leader of Mustang despite the fact that “he had no formal military training” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 150), although he had performed well when Gompo left him in charge of the main resistance forces in central Tibet. Surprisingly, the main reason he was chosen was because he was in good enough physical condition to survive Mustang’s harsh environment, and because he had no dependents to distract him from his assigned duties. In addition to choosing Yeshe the leader, Gompo selected 26 other men who were to undergo training at Camp Hale, and then return to act as advisors to the Tibetan guerrillas.

Once the selections were made, Yeshe, “along with an advance party, which included a 2-man radio team began their journey to Mustang” (Sonam, 2001). Upon their arrival in June 1960, they began their assigned task of establishing the base. Then, once ready, others would join them, and transit through Mustang en route to Tibet where they would build forward bases. Eventually, it was envisioned that there would be a total fighting force numbering approximately 2,100 guerrillas. As Knaus explains the design of the operation:

They were to make their way in contingents of three hundred to Mustang, from where they would set out to find permanent sites across the border inside Tibet, where they would operate as guerrilla units. The practice of the resistance fighters in eastern Tibet, who had concentrated their forces in fixed locations with disastrous consequences, was not to be repeated.

Only after the first three hundred had found an area inside Tibet from which they could disperse and live as guerrillas would the next increment be sent to Mustang to repeat the process. ... The CIA agreed to drop arms, trained leaders, and supplies to these sites as long as there was no public disclosure. This last point was critical, and it was agreed that the scheme would be abandoned if word of these operations leaked to the press. (p. 239)

The CIA fully understood what had caused the failure in the first phase of the insurgency, and it was determined not to repeat the errors of the past. But unfortunately, the plan began to unravel almost immediately.

The first group of 300 recruits left the refuge of Sikkim, made its way to an assembly point in Darjeeling, India, and then proceeded to Mustang. However, before departing for Darjeeling, the men told their compatriots working on road projects that they were going to form a new resistance army. Word quickly spread through the Tibetan community, and soon scores of men “left the road camps and made their way to Darjeeling until their mysterious migration from Sikkim attracted the attention of the newspapers” (Sonam). The stipulation imposed by the CIA, to avoid public disclosure, had been shattered, as evident from newspaper headlines of that time. On 1 August 1960, the Indian newspaper, the *Statesman*, announced: Mysterious Exodus from Sikkim: Khampas Leaving in Hundreds (Knaus, p. 242). To try and halt the flood of Tibetans heading to Darjeeling and minimize the damage already done, Gompo dispatched some of his men to Sikkim, but it was too late. The mass exodus continued, and soon there were over 2,000 men at Mustang. This number far exceeded what Yeshe’s meager supplies could support, and there was little chance the CIA would conduct an airdrop of supplies to Mustang because Eisenhower’s ban on covert flights was still in effect.

The situation became grim as autumn turned to winter. “The men were reduced to boiling their leather shoes and saddlebags for sustenance. Several froze to death” (Sonam). The CIA found itself faced with quite a dilemma. Should it abandon these men, and effectively give up all hope of generating a resistance movement against the Chinese, as it had said it would if the Mustang operation became public? The CIA was well within its rights to pursue this course of action, but the opportunity to maintain this thorn in the side of the Chinese was too tempting. “Like the airdrop operations in eastern

Tibet, the Mustang force had taken on a life of its own, and it was a capability that was not to be easily abandoned” (Knaus, p. 244). The operation would continue.

With the decision made and subsequent approval from the new Kennedy administration, the CIA made plans for its first airdrop to the Mustang force. President Kennedy approved the airdrop mission in early March, and it was flown on the 15th. Although not nearly enough to arm and equip 2,000 men, the supplies were substantial, and totaled “29,000 pounds of arms, and ammunition for 400 men” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 158). In addition, seven recent Camp Hale trainees were dropped during the mission. Gyen Yeshe took these supplies and men, and distributed them among eight 100-man companies, and devised a plan for fighting the Chinese:

His strategy was to send units of forty to fifty men down from the Mustang plateau onto the Brahmaputra floodplain, where they would attack isolated Chinese military camps and travel along the Lhasa-Xinjiang highway creating disruption along this major supply route. (Knaus, p. 246).

These guerrillas were also purposely organized in companies composed of individuals from various tribes and cities whenever possible, in an effort to break the tendency of these men to cluster with their own kind. This then can be considered another step in the effort to make the resistance movement a truly national endeavor.

Yeshe’s newly adopted strategy immediately began to deliver positive results as previously illustrated in the case of the captured Chinese documents. The Tibetans were also proving to be a real menace to the Chinese. “The Tibetan resistance activities had forced the PLA to deploy large numbers of PLA soldiers to guard the Tibet-Xinjiang Highway” (Shakya, p. 285), and forced China “to divert traffic for western Tibet to the Qinghai-Xinjiang highway three hundred kilometers to the north” (Knaus, p. 247). The Mustang operation was clearly off to a commendable beginning.

Gyen Yeshe, who had managed to establish the base at Mustang under the worst of conditions, had taken the recruits and formed them into a disciplined force. He had also assumed command of the entire Mustang contingent even though the CIA thought he was only meant to serve as commander of the advance party. Under this mistaken

impression, the CIA chose their own man, Lobsang Champa, to serve as field commander of the Mustang troops, and sent him to attend training at Camp Hale.

Upon completion of training, Lobsang Champa made his way to Mustang to assume command, where Gyen Yeshe not only refused to relinquish command, but demoted the new arrival. “The CIA’s protégé ended up as commander of only one company of a hundred men, a position he had little choice but to accept” (p. 247). The CIA was furious, but there was nothing it could do. Gyen Yeshe still had the support of Gompo Tashi, and the CIA had no direct influence over operations in Mustang because there were no CIA agents on the ground in Mustang. This was the first disagreement between the CIA and Tibetans regarding the Mustang operation. It also initiated a pattern that was to last throughout the insurgency. The Tibetans did what they wanted, regardless of CIA desires, because there was no one present to stop them. However, before examining the implications of this, we must first examine another development, occurring simultaneously: relations between India and China, so jealously protected by Nehru, were about to crumble.

I. THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER WAR

The seeds of the 1962 border war between India and China were sown while India was still a colony, but it was really Nehru’s actions that made conflict unavoidable. There were two disputed areas over which the conflict steadily escalated. The first was located along the northwest portion of the Sino-Indian border, known as the Aksai Chin. The other was the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA), and separated India and China along the McMahon Line, which had been established during negotiations with the Tibetans following McMahon’s successful expedition.

In the nineteenth century, Great Britain was not really concerned with the Aksai Chin because the Chinese did not pose a threat to the British even as they were extending the borders of India. It was the Russians who chiefly concerned Great Britain. Careful attention was thus paid to India’s border with Afghanistan in case the Russians tried to expand their empire southward. Over time, the Aksai Chin became a nebulous area that neither side really gave much thought to.

On the other hand, as previously stated, the NEFA's limits were defined by the McMahon Line, as agreed upon at the Simla Convention in 1914. The one crucial point to remember here is that the Chinese had not been partner to the agreement. Only the Tibetans and British had signed the document, so the agreement—from China's perspective—did not apply to it. India, however, felt the McMahon Line did apply to China, and based its future actions on this belief.

One can already see the potential for disagreement over who owned the disputed territories. In the words of Neville Maxwell, "That, ... Britain left unresolved boundary problems to the inheritors of her authority on the sub-continent must be counted as a considerable failure, and it was one which would cost India dear" (p. 64). However, the British alone are not to blame for the eventual war. India never made an effort to peacefully resolve the border issue with China. In fact, during the same 1954 negotiations with the Chinese in which India recognized China's sovereignty over Tibet, India went to great lengths not to raise the border issue at all. This omission, in one author's opinion, "suggests that the Indians' intention in 1954 was to put China in a position which would make it possible to argue that, because the Chinese had not raised the boundary question, they had tacitly agreed that it was already settled" (Maxwell, p. 79). The Indians were clearly trying to slip something by the Chinese because they knew the basis for their border claims was not solidly established.

The situation began to deteriorate in 1957 when the Indians finally discovered a road, completed by the Chinese in 1955, that went across a portion of the Aksai Chin. The fact that it took India two years to become aware of a road in their supposed territory is evidence that, even though India claimed the area, it had no control over it. After discovering the road, the Indians responded by instituting what became known as their forward policy. As part of this new aggressive stance, India established border posts in the Aksai Chin, as well as the NEFA, and conducted patrols to show that each territory belonged to India. Through the use of these patrols, which were meant to intimidate but not to engage the Chinese, India hoped the Chinese would withdraw from the disputed zones. Not surprisingly, the Chinese refused to leave what they felt was rightfully Chinese territory, and hostility between the two sides grew.

Then, on 25 Aug 1959, the first shooting incident in the border dispute took place along the McMahon Line. However, instead of trying to defuse the situation by engaging the Chinese in discussions, India stuck to its forward policy, and continued to call for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Indian terrain. Conditions steadily deteriorated, and the Indians became even more stubborn despite China's attempt to convince them to discuss the issue before it escalated out of control.

By July 1962, India still displayed no intention of backing off, and the time for peaceful resolution rapidly wound down. "The Indian position was solid. Before there could be any talks or negotiations on the boundary question China must withdraw all personnel from the territory which India claimed" (p. 245). These were not exactly reasonable terms, since India would not simultaneously withdraw its troops from the disputed areas, and China flatly refused to comply. Now there was no turning back from war; it was simply a matter of time.

The NEFA continued heating up in the early autumn, as scattered clashes between Indians and Chinese occurred, but as of October, no major engagements had erupted. China, though, seemed to anticipate that an Indian attack was coming, as revealed in orders issued to Chinese border troops on 6 October 1962. "If the Indian Army attacks ... don't just repulse them, hit back ruthlessly so that it hurts" (Knaus, p. 260). However, in reality, the Chinese had no intention of waiting for the Indians to attack them.

On the 10th, the Chinese launched an attack in the NEFA, below Thagla Ridge, before the Indians were able to commence the first stages of their Operation LEGHORN, which was designed to push the Chinese back over Thagla Ridge. This was the first round of the war, but the Chinese were not about to stop there. The Chinese followed up the initial attack with larger assaults on the 20th that were aimed at both the McMahon Line and the Aksai Chin. The superiority of the Chinese troops soon became evident. By the 22nd, the PLA had wiped out the Indian 7 Brigade along the Mc Mahon Line, and was driving south along both fronts.

The situation was starting to look desperate to Nehru, and he turned to outsiders for assistance. On the 29th, he accepted a U.S. offer for military aid. With this move, Nehru abandoned India's position as head of the nonaligned movement, and shifted over

to the western bloc. Even so and despite the immediate arrival of U.S. weaponry in India, it was too late to stop the Chinese. The Chinese started another series of attacks on 15 November and by the 20th, “no organized Indian military force was left in NEFA or in the territory claimed by China in the Western sector. Militarily the Chinese victory was complete, the Indian defeat absolute” (Maxwell, p. 408). The Indians were now vulnerable, and worried that the Chinese would continue their advance into India proper. Luckily for India, however, the Chinese withdrew, remaining only in the disputed areas they felt belonged to China: the Aksai Chin and along the border of the Chinese claim line in the NEFA (located south of the McMahon Line). Despite this withdrawal, India still did not trust China, and made provisions to protect its borders from invasion by establishing a new unit.

J. THE SPECIAL FRONTIER FORCE

India’s newfound association with the West meant India could offer the Tibetan resistance more assistance because India and China were no longer on friendly terms. Support was most predominantly displayed in the formation of a Tibetan unit known as the Special Frontier Force (SFF), although India later used this same unit for its own domestic purposes instead of employing it in the Tibetan guerrilla war. The SFF was formed in November 1962, “under the command of the Research and Analysis Wing of Indian Intelligence” (McCarthy, p. 239), and was designed to be a 10,000-man commando group composed of Tibetans who were trained and commanded by Indian officers. The men “were given six months of basic training identical to the Indian Army’s. Then they were given supplemental training by CIA and Indian instructors in commando tactics, guerrilla warfare techniques, sabotage, and the use of explosives” (Knaus, p. 272).

According to the agreement between the Indian government and the guerrilla leadership, the SFF would be used for missions in Tibet. Unfortunately, the Indians, more concerned with protecting their borders against a potential Chinese attack, reneged on this promise. The SFF was never used in offensive operations against the Chinese in Tibet, although it was used occasionally for limited missions. For instance, the SFF “conducted cross-border reconnaissance operations to place sensors for detecting nuclear and missile tests and devices for intercepting Chinese military communications” (p. 273).

For the most part, though, the SFF protected India's borders, and was not allowed to aid the Tibetan resistance. Thus, a highly trained, well-equipped force that could have made considerable contributions in a direct campaign against the Chinese was prevented from doing so. This turn of events in the planned versus actual role of the SFF left the Mustang force to continue the struggle on its own.

K. THE DEMISE OF THE RESISTANCE

After the Mustang group's initial successes, guerrilla activity began to taper off for several reasons. First, the SFF was receiving the bulk of the attention and support from both the United States and India. Second, without arms for more than half his men, Gyen Yeshe refused to move operations into Tibet until he received more supplies from the U.S. Finally, given the inaction at Mustang, the CIA pondered what role, if any, it wanted Mustang to play in the resistance. In the summer of 1963, CIA officers met with Yeshe to try to sort this out.

After several days of intense negotiation, a compromise was reached. Yeshe agreed to split his armed forces, and have half of them operate inside Tibet while the remainder stayed at Mustang with the unarmed men. At the same time, the CIA reexamined the mission of the guerrillas, and determined the men would be of more use in an intelligence gathering role rather than carrying out attacks against the Chinese. The CIA also urged Yeshe to send some of his unarmed men to India so they could receive additional training. However, once sent off to India, the men were enrolled in the SFF, and Yeshe never saw them again. Consequently, the Mustang force began to shrink, and the combination of changing missions and smaller force size took its toll. "During all of 1963 and most of 1964, not a single truck was ambushed, ... and no PLA outposts were attacked" (Conboy & Morrison, p. 198).

This period of inactivity came to an end on 6 June 1964, when a group of Tibetans ambushed a Chinese truck convoy. One would expect this mission to have received favorable response because the Tibetans were showing that they were still willing to engage the Chinese, but there was a problem: the raiders had been accompanied by three European cameramen who filmed the ambush. "The resulting unwelcome publicity, brought on by the airing of the film on television all over Europe, caused the CIA to cease funding the rebels for six months" (Grunfeld, p. 157). This was

the second time the secrecy of the Mustang operation had been compromised, and the CIA was not happy. Retribution for this ill-advised act did not stop just with a temporary halt in funds. The Tibetan who had led the ambush “was recalled to Mustang to face a round of criticism and reassignment to an administrative job” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 199). Needless to say, after the unwanted publicity and the administrative action against the Tibetan leader, there was not much incentive to conduct further ambushes along the highway. Mustang returned to inactivity.

Again, this ambush revealed one of the most glaring weaknesses of the Mustang operation. Since there were no CIA operatives at Mustang, control over activities was tenuous at best. The guerrillas were fiercely independent men who wanted to expel the Chinese from Tibetan soil, and did not care much for the limited aims of their U.S. and Indian partners:

They had not asked Lhasa’s permission or endorsement when they began their revolt against the Chinese. By this time most of them had been making their own operational decisions for almost a decade as a matter of survival. Their natural inclination toward unilateral action was compounded by the fact that the Tibetans had more immediate objectives that were not shared by their partners. ... They had little interest in delaying their actions to serve some future Indian strategic interest or even more remote U.S. objective. (Knaus, p. 278)

The CIA, once again, entertained the idea of changing the leadership at Mustang in the hopes that the guerrillas could be brought under tighter control, but nothing was done. In the meantime, Gyen Yeshe begged for more airdrops so he could arm the remainder of his men, and renew operations in Tibet, as the CIA desired. Remember, no supply missions had been flown to support the Tibetans at Mustang since the initial ones in 1961, and the Tibetans desperately needed arms and ammunition. The CIA relented, and flew what was to be the last resupply mission in May 1965.

By 1965, other world events had occurred, further restricting U.S. support for the Tibetan resistance movement. As we have seen, Kennedy supported the Tibetan operation, but once he was assassinated in 1963 things changed. The new president, Lyndon Johnson, did not admire India as much as Kennedy had, and relations between the U.S. and India began to cool. To further draw Johnson’s attention away, Vietnam

started becoming a priority. “Johnson was increasingly consumed by the Vietnam War, leaving him little time to thoughtfully contemplate South Asia” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 208). Tibet was being nudged out from under the covert spotlight, where it had been for so long, and it never regained its prominent position. A final blow to the Tibetan insurgency during this phase occurred after the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1965. At that time, the United States officially cut all arms shipments to India and Pakistan, and the bond, carefully established by Kennedy, between the U.S. and India, was severely strained. The downward spiral had begun.

From 1964 until 1966, the CIA took 25 teams of Camp Hale trainees, and had them infiltrate back into Tibet from India for the purpose of gathering intelligence. The results, however, were only marginal, as the Chinese continued to build up their presence along the Tibetan border. “One team was able to survive and send reports for over two years ... One lasted for seven months, another for two months ... Others were forced to return within weeks, unable to find a safe base inside Tibet or even obtain food” (Knaus, p. 281). Due to the intermittent gains achieved during these operations and the extreme risks to the agents, the CIA cancelled the program in 1967, and all remaining teams were called back to India.

The situation for the men staging out of Mustang was equally bleak. In 1966, some of the Mustang guerrillas crossed into Tibet, and suffered their worst casualties yet when six men were killed, including their company commander. The response to this loss was swift as the controlling authority in New Delhi declared that the guerrillas were to take no “offensive action which might invite Chinese retaliation. Any activity in their homeland, they were told, would be limited to passive intelligence collection” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 222). But if Tibetans were no longer allowed to attack the Chinese, how could they expect to force the Chinese out of Tibet? The future not only looked grim for the Tibetan resistance, but Mustang was about to suffer yet another setback.

In 1967, the CIA took its first steps in the United States to signal that it was ready to wind down the Tibetan operation:

In Washington, the Tibet desk, which had been under the Far East Division’s China Branch ever since its establishment in 1956, was transferred to the Near East Division. ... the change underscored the fact

that the remaining Tibetan paramilitary assets, with rare exception, would probably not be leaving Indian soil. (p. 230)

The U.S. had decided that the days of launching guerrilla missions into Tibet were quickly drawing to a close as the Chinese continued to increase their strength in the Tibetan region opposite Mustang. Then, as interest in the operation continued waning and Chinese forces grew, diplomatic ties between India and the U.S. hit a new low. This further restricted Mustang operations.

As if external factors were not damaging enough, long simmering rifts in the Mustang leadership were also widening. CIA-trained guerrillas at Mustang were unhappy with the way Yeshe was running Mustang. He was acting more like a tribal chieftain than a guerrilla leader (Sonam). As a result, “the group in Mustang was riddled with regional and sectarian feud, as well as accusations of financial mismanagement” (Shakya, p. 360). In order to maintain Mustang as center for the national resistance movement and in order to prevent the total collapse of the organization, the CIA decided Gyen Yeshe had to be replaced. Consequently, in February 1969, Gyato Wangdu, who had shown up in Mustang earlier to serve as Yeshe’s deputy commander, replaced Yeshe as commander of the Mustang forces. Unfortunately, the leadership change was an example of too little too late, and would turn out to have dire consequences for the men at Mustang.

That same year, the CIA informed the Tibetans that it was withdrawing its support, and that the force in Mustang needed to be reduced in size to a token force. The rest of the men were to be taught new skills and reintegrated into society. The announcement came as a shock to the Tibetans, and was a mortal wound because Mustang had been considered “the symbolic paramilitary arm of its government in exile” (Conboy & Morrison, p. 239). All hope of expelling the Chinese from Tibet had rested on the shoulders of those in Mustang. The CIA had finally realized, and admitted to itself, however, that it was impossible for these men to establish bases inside Tibet from which they could harass the Chinese. Therefore, there was no reason to continue supporting them. Yet, even with the withdrawal of U.S. support, the Tibetans refused to terminate their resistance. It took betrayal by a fellow Tibetan to finally stop the Mustang guerrillas.

In 1973, the Chinese began pressuring the Nepalese government to “suppress the Tibetan operation in Mustang in exchange for good relations with China and Chinese economic assistance” (Smith, p. 509). King Birendra was amenable to this offer, but without knowing where the Mustang base was he was unable to help. Then Gyen Yeshe arrived and offered to help the Nepalese remove the Tibetans from their territory in exchange for asylum. The Nepalese took him up on his offer, and Yeshe told the Nepalese where the camp was located, and how operations worked.

After receiving these details from Yeshe, Birendra sent 10,000 Nepalese soldiers and Gurkhas to Mustang in 1974 to close the base down. Simultaneously, the Dalai Lama, much to the dismay of the Tibetan guerrillas, “sent a taped message to the Mustang forces telling them to lay down their arms and to surrender peacefully. With much anguish, most did so, but some chose to commit suicide rather than give up the fight against the Chinese invader” (McCarthy, p. 247).

However, the Mustang leader, Wangdu, and a small group of his men did not surrender. They attempted to escape to the Indian border, but ended up falling victim to Yeshe’s betrayal. Yeshe had passed Wangdu’s likely escape path to the Nepalese, and they, in turn, passed it to the Chinese.

Pursued and escaping a number of ambushes set for him and his men along the way, Wangdu and the others became a victim of the treachery when they were intercepted by a large Chinese patrol near Tinker pass, a border location at an altitude of nearly 18,000 feet. Their magnificent effort came to an end 20 miles from safety when Wangdu, in advance with four others of the rest of his small group, realizing there was no escape, charged head-on into the Chinese. He and the four with him died in a hail of bullets. (p. 247)

Although Wangdu was killed, several of his men did manage to escape the Chinese and reach the Indian border, but Mustang, as well as all armed resistance against the Chinese, was finished. The Mustang operation had lasted for 15 years, and despite high hopes and some early successes, was ultimately a failure. What caused the Mustang operation to fail is what we turn to next.

L. REASONS FOR THE FAILURE AT MUSTANG

We can divide the causes for failure into two categories: external and internal factors. Among external factors is the limited arms and ammunition provided to the Tibetans by the United States. As we have seen, there were several political concerns that prevented the U.S. from supplying the Tibetans with more airdrops. As justified as these concerns were, one cannot deny that the lack of support seriously hampered Mustang operations. It should not have come as a surprise to the Americans when the Tibetans were unable to accomplish as much as hoped, and even less as the years went by. With less than half the fighting force armed, and a total of three airdrops in 15 years, it is quite amazing the Tibetans accomplished as much as they did.

Another contributor to the failure at Mustang was the formation of the Special Frontier Force. The SFF could have been a force multiplier for the men at Mustang, if used as originally envisioned by the Tibetans. The SFF was highly trained and properly equipped, and if allowed to engage in offensive operations with the Mustang guerrillas against the Chinese, could have inflicted serious damage. However, it appears India never planned to use the SFF for this offensive purpose. Instead, the predominant role of the SFF was to protect India's borders from the Chinese. Thus, a potentially useful tool for assisting the Tibetan resistance was squandered.

Additionally, the SFF garnered the bulk of attention and support from India and the United States at the expense of the Mustang guerrillas. Near the end, this favoritism towards the SFF doomed the guerrillas.

[T]he Mustang force had been supplanted in many ways by the Special Frontier Force (SFF). This force, rather than Mustang, was going to receive the essential sustaining material and political support over the long term from both the Indians and the U.S. In the unlikely event of a major conflict with China, it would be the SFF and not the aging Mustang guerrillas that would play the major part in any action in Tibet. (Knaus, p. 297)

Once the CIA determined that the Mustang guerrillas had outlasted their usefulness, and it was time to terminate U.S. involvement with them, it was only a matter of time before the guerrillas, left on their own, finally ceased to exist.

The physical distance between the United States and Nepal also hampered the operation, as well as the remoteness of the base inside Mustang itself. All supplies had to be brought in by air because Mustang is landlocked and remote, and Nepal lacks nearby seaports. Consequently, even when supplies were available, they could not be provided in the quantities possible by ship borne transportation, and were restricted by the limited payload capabilities of aircraft. Also, given the great distance between the U.S. and Mustang, information was slow in moving from one location to the next, and action was generated even more slowly due to bureaucratic delays. When the U.S. did receive intelligence that could have been exploited by the Tibetans, meanwhile the time it took to develop and approve an operation was such that the intelligence was, by then, outdated and normally useless.

Shifting attention to the realm of internal factors, the largest problem internal to the resistance was the fact that, despite several attempts, the force in Mustang never managed to rid itself of regional biases. The Tibetans themselves chose who would attend training at Camp Hale, while the CIA had no say in the matter. As expected, Gompo Tashi, and later his successors, chose men they were familiar with and could trust. Invariably, these were men who belonged to the same tribe, or and as a minimum, came from the same region of Tibet as those choosing them.

Because of this, and as to be expected, the majority of the trainees were Khambas [sic] from southeastern Kham and a few from adjoining areas in Kham. Only a few Amdos and but two or three Goloks were trained, despite requests by the CIA officers for trainees from all areas. (McCarthy, p. 244).

By filling the ranks of the Mustang force with only a few “outsiders,” resentment thus grew among the Amdowas and Goloks, and favoritism was perceived by the minority whether it existed or not—although in this case it clearly did. A more heterogeneous force would have had a better chance of forming a national resistance. As it was, the resistance was “too often unable to transcend narrow tribal loyalties for the movement to take on a fully national and dynamic character” (Barnett & Aikner, 1994, p. 194). The traditional rivalries and suspicions of one Tibetan tribe about another could not be discarded, and Mustang paid the price for these deep-seated beliefs.

An additional internal factor that sabotaged the chances of Mustang succeeding from the outset was that the 2,100 Tibetans were supposed to make their way to Mustang in groups of 300. But since the Tibetans were unable to refrain from discussing the endeavor they were about to embark upon, the planned stream of personnel to Mustang became an uncontrollable flood. Consequently, the plan was defeated before it even had the opportunity to progress past the first stage and, worse, the secrecy of the operation was compromised by the sudden exodus from Sikkim. Through this combination of actions and immediate consequences, the Tibetans played a critical role in defeating their own guerrilla organization.

A final problem area worth mentioning is the seesaw battle between the Tibetans and CIA over arms shipments. From the beginning, the CIA stated that arms deliveries were predicated on the guerrillas establishing bases inside Tibet. The Tibetans, who did conduct several forays into Tibet after the initial airdrops in 1961, were never able to establish permanent bases in Tibet, as originally envisioned by the CIA. Consequently, the CIA refused to make further drops until the agreed upon conditions were met by the Tibetans. But why did the CIA stand so firmly behind this position?

It is important to remember that Mustang, contrary to what the Tibetans seemed to believe, was supposed to be a transit point, and not the focus of the entire resistance. The CIA kept pushing for the Tibetans to establish bases in Tibet because that was the intent of the original plan. The Tibetans, however, countered with the fact they could not establish bases with unarmed men. Once the arms were delivered, the Tibetans claimed, they would move more of their operations to Tibet. Since the arms and ammunition never arrived, the Tibetans did not establish bases in Tibet, and the number of missions conducted in Tibet steadily declined. Then, by the time of the last airdrop in 1965, the Chinese had consolidated their control along the Tibet-Nepal border, and it was impossible for the Tibetans to establish bases in Tibet. The window of opportunity had been shut, and there was no chance that it could be reopened by a group of minimally armed, aging Tibetan guerrillas against a Chinese foe who was both numerous and heavily armed.

With the examination of the rise and fall of the Tibetan insurgency complete, the discussion will now proceed to the measures the Chinese pursued during their consolidation of Tibet to ensure the Tibetan insurgent movement did not resurrect itself at a future date.

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V. CONSOLIDATION

A. BEGINNING STAGES

As explained earlier, once the Dalai Lama fled Tibet and settled in India, the Chinese increased the pace of “democratic reforms” and concentrated on crushing all remaining resistance in Tibet. Then, in 1961, the Panchen Lama traveled to Peking and gave a speech proclaiming the benefits seen in Tibet since the initiation of the more aggressive Chinese program. Privately, though, the Panchen Lama expressed some of his concerns to Mao in a document known as the “70,000 character report.” In the report, the Panchen Lama stated that the Chinese, after the Lhasa revolt, had indiscriminately arrested Tibetans, and did not seem to concern themselves with whether or not the arrested individuals had taken part in the uprising. Additionally, he claimed loyal aristocrats had been arrested simply because of their upper class status. Lastly, the Panchen Lama provided estimates of the number of Tibetans killed and imprisoned thus far (Smith, p. 525). Mao did not take these criticisms of Chinese policy well, and began regarding the Panchen Lama as a “rock on the road to socialism” (p. 526). He had to be brought fully into the Chinese fold, or eliminated as a threat.

In early 1962, the Chinese tried to get the Panchen Lama to denounce the Dalai Lama and to assume the Dalai Lama’s responsibilities in Tibet, but he refused to cooperate. Consequently, in 1964, the Chinese arrested and imprisoned the Panchen Lama—where he remained until 1974. Thus, another major internal impediment to Chinese control was removed. China appeared free to deal with the Tibetans as she pleased, but there was one last obstacle. The champion of human rights, the UN, was ready to raise the Tibetan issue once again.

B. THE UN’S PARTING SHOT

In August 1965, after receiving reports of continued human rights violations from Tibetan refugees who had successfully crossed into India, and following the pleas of the Dalai Lama for further action, the UN initiated a proposal to address the situation in Tibet. This time, though, India fully supported the resolution because she no longer had to fear damaging relations with China. Since the conclusion of the border war in 1962, India and China had ceased their friendly relationship, and India now viewed China with

suspicion. To counter this newest development, the Soviet bloc banded together in support of a fellow Communist country, China, and claimed that the U.S. was using the Tibetan issue to expand the Cold War. As a consequence, from the beginning, it was clear that any resolution would once more have to be restricted to human rights violations if there was to be any hope of it succeeding:

The fundamental issue of the legality of China's claim to sovereignty over Tibet could not be discussed because no country had recognized Tibetan sovereignty in the past and none wished to challenge Chinese sovereignty in the present. Tibet's acceptance of the 17-Point Agreement had essentially eliminated the issue of Tibet's political status. (p. 531)

Though several smaller nations wished to do more to express their sympathy for Tibet's plight, everyone understood that anything beyond human rights issues would result in defeat. As in the past, those supporting the resolution felt that it was better to come away with a small victory than to suffer a total loss. The resulting resolution was, therefore, similar to the one passed in 1959 (in that it restricted itself to human rights concerns), and likewise received acceptance. By passing this resolution, the UN made it known that it sympathized with the Tibetans, but also proved that it was incapable of taking any action to halt or mitigate destructive Chinese behavior. Although Tibet had not been abandoned by the international community, the UN once again proved "merely a toothless tiger, with little power to enforce any policy upon its bickering members" (Hardin, 1974). Unfortunately, this proved to be the last Tibetan resolution passed at the UN, even though there was one last attempt to bring the Tibetan issue to the fore.

In 1968, there was some hope India would co-sponsor another resolution, but the United States sensed that the chances of this occurring were not promising. Several Americans working on the U.S. ambassador to India's staff anticipated difficulty. They "warned that the Indians might not wish to 'run afoul of Soviet and East European sensitivity by raising an issue concerning human rights' so soon after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia" (Knaus, p. 307). Their hunch proved correct, and India refused to co-sponsor the resolution. After India declined this opportunity to champion the Tibetan cause, the proposal died due to lack of support.

China, having now experienced firsthand Soviet support for a fellow Communist nation, knew that any future meddling in Chinese affairs at the UN could be thwarted. China was clear to proceed with its incorporation of Tibet without fear of outside interference. Conditions in Tibet were about to worsen.

C. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Upon removal of the Panchen Lama in 1964, China proceeded with physical incorporation of central Tibet. As will be remembered, China had already integrated Kham and Amdo into preexisting Chinese provinces which meant that only central Tibet remained physically separate from China. To remove this one exception, in September 1965, China established the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). With the establishment of the TAR, China removed any doubt regarding the future of Tibet. The TAR “marked not only the establishment of the permanent system of Chinese control in Tibet, but also an acceleration in the pace of ideological indoctrination, collectivization and Sinocization” (Smith, p. 534). China now possessed direct political control of Tibet, although it maintained the illusion of Tibetan influence by continuing to elect Tibetans to government positions. However, despite continued representation in the government, the Tibetans still lacked real power. All decisions were made by the Chinese.

While the physical restructuring of Tibet as an integral part of China was progressing according to plan, problems were encountered on the economic front. Due to resistance within his own government, collectivization in China, as well as in Tibet, was not being implemented as rapidly as Mao desired. To rectify the problem, he decided to accelerate, rather than retard, the pace of collectivization. In 1966, Mao called upon students throughout China to carry out his vision. The students, who became known as “Red Guards,” rallied round their leader, criticized those in the government who opposed collectivization, and began implementing collectivization in parts of China where it did not already exist.

After rapidly spreading throughout China, the Red Guards entered Tibet in order to extend Mao’s vision to the TAR. The Red Guards descended upon Tibet with a vengeance, and went to work destroying the last vestiges of Tibetan identity. The goal of the Red Guards was to “eradicate the ‘four olds’: old ideology, culture, habits, and customs; and to institute the reverse of these evils, the ‘four news’” (Powers, p. 181).

Given that Tibetan society was radically different even from that of traditional China, the Red Guards felt that Tibet had to be dealt with particularly harshly if it was to conform to Mao's plan. Thus, the Red Guards went on an orgy of death and destruction:

Lacking even the limited restraint exercised by the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army, the Red Guards held mass executions, engaged in torture on an unprecedented scale, and rampaged throughout the countryside destroying monasteries, forcing monks to urinate on sacred texts, ... scrawling graffiti on the walls of temples and monasteries, and subjecting religious and political leaders (even those who collaborated with the Chinese authorities) to *thamzing*. (pp. 181-182)

Thamzing, which had been used by the Chinese in Tibet since the 1950s, was a process in which an individual was subjected to accusations from fellow Tibetans in order to complete his social transformation. As one Tibetan described *thamzing* sessions:

These 'struggles' were diabolically cruel criticism meetings where children were made to accuse their parents of imaginary crimes; where farmers were made to denounce and beat up landlords; where pupils were made to degrade their teachers; where every shred of dignity in a person was torn to pieces by his people, his children and his loved ones. (Smith, p. 402)

The *thamzing* sessions varied greatly in duration, and could last for days if the individual was not making the desired social transformation. Additionally, the sessions were so brutal that it was not uncommon for the "struggle" to end in the victim's death.

With the fury of the Red Guards released, Tibetans suffered their worst treatment at the hands of the Chinese to date, and the results were devastating. Within months of their arrival, the Red Guards had removed almost all evidence of Buddhist culture in Tibet: "100 percent of monasteries in Tibet had suffered damage. '99 percent of them were destroyed completely; only seven or eight remained" (Bhailan, 1997-2003, p. 83). However, before destroying religious objects, the Red Guards salvaged whatever they could:

Objects made of gold, silver, copper, brass, gilded-copper, bell-metal, etc. were beaten into ingots and transported on pack animals to the nearest motorable road. Then, they were loaded onto hundreds of trucks and carted out to China, where they were melted down. (p. 84)

Also, in the effort to permanently eradicate Buddhism in Tibet, Tibetans were forbidden to practice their religion, and were forced to burn their religious texts. In exchange, and to provide the Tibetans with something more enlightening to read, the Red Guards handed out copies of Mao's *Thoughts* in Tibetan (Hopkirk, 1982, p. 263). Although, the Red Guards were doing their utmost to eradicate Buddhism in Tibet (and nearly succeeded), religion refused to die. It was simply driven underground until such time that freedom to practice religion was reinstated in Tibet.

In 1968, after this initial wave of terror to destroy the "old," the Chinese began building the "new" by moving forward with collectivization. In the process, communes were forced upon the Tibetans even though most communities had not yet undergone the first steps in the collectivization scheme. Regardless, collectivization was implemented throughout Tibet. Thus, by September 1975, China could claim that: "99 percent of the townships had set up communes and that 'the socialist transformation of agriculture and animal husbandry has been basically completed'" (Smith, p. 551).

Another program initiated around the same time as this pronouncement was China's effort to colonize Tibet. This particular move appears to have been part of a deliberate campaign to slowly breed Tibetans out of Tibet. As part of the program, China put pressure on Tibetan women to marry Chinese men, while at the same time, prohibiting Chinese women from marrying Tibetan men (p. 560). These subtle steps were merely the first stages in the colonization scheme, and would be followed by additional measures in the future.

Thus, by destroying traditional Tibetan culture (with particular concentration on Buddhism), establishing communes throughout Tibet, and introducing Chinese colonization, China seemed well on its way to achieving its goal of full Tibetan incorporation. According to van Walt van Praag, "Tibet's social structure had been replaced by a socialist one" (p. 174). The Cultural Revolution had ravaged Tibet, and according to Smith, the toll was high:

The former Tibetan governmental structure and religious establishment, the infrastructure of Tibetan nationalism, had been totally eradicated. Less than 1,000 monks remained in the eight monasteries not destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. The Tibetan political and cultural elite...had

been co-opted, eliminated, or forced into exile. Even those aspects that distinguished Tibet physically or visually—architecture, especially monastic architecture and religious monuments of all types, and all forms of decoration in art, architecture and even dress style—had been destroyed or homogenized to accord with Chinese Communist proletarian styles. (p. 561).

In addition, as previously mentioned, since the first days following the Chinese troops' entry across the Tibetan frontier, China had progressively built up Tibet's infrastructure in order to facilitate control. The resulting accomplishments were rather impressive: "China transferred its principal nuclear base to Tibet in 1962 and built nine airfields and an extensive network of roads used almost exclusively by the military" (van Walt van Praag, p. 174). China now had the means to rush troops to potential trouble spots, and quell resistance before it had a chance to spread. The Chinese had expended much effort to ensure an event such as the Lhasa revolt of 1959 could not happen again, and the measures seemed to be paying dividends.

After the implementation of all these changes, China held Tibet firmly in her grasp. Yet, as grim as the situation was for the Tibetans, a reprieve was on the horizon. In 1976, Mao, along with two other top Chinese leaders died, and a new regime emerged. The effects of this new regime would not reach Tibet for a few years, but in 1979 conditions finally started to improve.

D. CHINA UNDER DENG XIAOPING

With the removal of Mao and his henchmen from power, China entered a period of liberalization that Deng Xiaoping promised would lead to a "more open China" that would "reverse the excesses of the past" (Powers, p. 182). The Chinese government's Tibetan goals, during this time of liberalization, were "aimed at improving Tibetan economic conditions and allowing some of the more innocuous expressions of Tibetan culture, including some Tibetan religious practices. This economic and cultural liberalization, it was anticipated, would defuse the remnants of Tibetan discontent with Chinese rule" (Smith, p. 563). The belief that relaxing pressure on the Tibetans would eliminate all remaining discontent proved to be erroneous, but it would be a while before China learned this lesson.

Initially, to show commitment to the new liberal policy, China released some Tibetan prisoners in 1977 and then again in 1979. China also attempted to entice the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet by inviting the Dalai Lama's older brother, Gyalo Thondup, to visit Beijing and discuss terms for the Dalai Lama's return with Deng Xiaoping. As an inducement for establishing closer relations, Deng agreed to let members of the exiled Tibetan community visit Tibet. The Chinese government allowed this visit because it was under the impression that, from what its representatives in Tibet said, great strides had been made since the feudal days of Tibetan rule. Therefore, after witnessing the progress made, the Chinese hoped the delegation could convince the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet.

Despite the expectations generated by the Chinese reports, it turns out the Beijing government had been misinformed by its officials in Tibet, and the delegation's report was the opposite of what the Chinese expected. The report expressed "complete condemnation of Chinese past and current policies in Tibet" (van Walt van Praag, p. 175). Furthermore, the delegation was met everywhere it went in Tibet, by throngs of people displaying their loyalty to the Dalai Lama. This last aspect was particularly troubling to the Chinese because, prior to the visit, they had received assurances from Chinese officials inside Tibet that Tibetans no longer had any allegiance to the Dalai Lama. In fact, the government in Beijing had been warned that it would be difficult to keep the Tibetans from displaying hostility towards the delegation because the Tibetans had all been converted to the socialist path during the period of Mao's rule. Obviously, this was not the case. The reception the Tibetan exile delegation received brought home a harsh reality to the Chinese: "Twenty years of repression of all aspects of Tibetan culture and nationalism and endless propaganda on the superiority of Chinese socialism had not eradicated Tibetans' faith in the Dalai Lama or their dissatisfaction with Chinese rule" (Smith, p. 567). Since the government officials in Tibet apparently had no idea about what had really transpired in Tibet over the past two decades, the Chinese leadership decided to check out the situation on its own.

In May 1980, the Chinese General Secretary, Hu Yaobang, and a fact-finding mission visited Tibet to see if the claims of the Tibetan delegation were indeed true. To Hu's great dismay, they were, and he "conceded publicly that Tibet had been severely

maladministered [sic], that the Tibetan people had been subjected to suffering, and that in nearly thirty years of Chinese rule ‘no marked improvement had been brought about in the people’s livelihood’ (van Walt van Praag, p. 175). Hu was not happy with what he saw in Tibet, and announced plans to improve the welfare of the average Tibetan. Consequently, a new policy, known as “regulation 31,” was imposed in Tibet. According to the new program, “Religious persecution was outlawed and Tibetans’ traditional methods of agriculture and husbandry restored” (Hopkirk, 1982, p. 264). Yet, by 1984, despite his promises and the introduction of various reforms, living conditions in Tibet had changed little.

Along with the introduction of economic reforms, China increased its exploitation of Tibet’s natural resources. In addition to the extraction of Tibetan timber, which had been going on for quite a while, the Chinese searched for other resources. “In 1980, Radio Lhasa announced the prospecting of platinum, gold, chromium, steel, copper, bronze, lead, jade, diamond and uranium in Tibet” (Bhailan, p. 100). Consequently, at the same time China was making some attempts to improve Tibetans’ welfare, she was also stripping Tibet of as many items as possible in exchange for this ‘assistance.’

Returning to the subject of negotiations, three more Tibetan exile delegations followed the first one, in 1980, 1982, and 1984. The Chinese hoped that the openness they were displaying would convince the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet, but this was not to be. Even though the delegations were received in Beijing and met with government officials, they were not allowed to discuss any issues with the Chinese that challenged Tibet’s present status or its governance. Nothing substantive could be accomplished, and the meetings only served to make the Chinese government appear more accommodating when, in reality, there was no change, nor intent to change.

However, as minimal as Tibetan economic gains during liberalization were, the picture from the Tibetan perspective was not all gloomy. Tibetans did manage to achieve a comeback in one area that the Chinese failed to anticipate. Liberalization reignited nationalism in Tibet, after it had been nearly wiped out during the repressive Cultural Revolution, and disturbances began anew. “In 1979 and 1981, widespread unrest was reported in Tibet, and a year later more than 100 demonstrators were arrested in

Shigatse” (p. 176). China finally realized that the cause of this resurgence in opposition was the unrestrained revival of religion, and took measures to address the problem:

By 1984 the CCP had substantially reestablished political control over the religious revival, confining it primarily to individual expressions of faith and the most superficial aspects of religious practice, which were considered relatively innocuous and had the added benefit of creating the illusion of religious freedom for foreign visitors. (Smith, p. 583)

Despite these measures, though, Tibetan unrest did not subside, and more action was deemed necessary to halt the growing turmoil.

The Chinese government then ceased conversing with the Tibetan exiles, and introduced more Chinese administrators into Tibet in order to reassert political control. Additionally, to aid the new administrators with their task, “there was substantial state investment in the TAR, ... [and] it appears that most of this went for roads needed by the army and urban infrastructure needed for the post-1959 administration” (Saunders, Goldstein, Holbrooke, Jones, Sidney, Lampton, Perkins, 1992). As part of the effort to modernize Tibet, China also started 43 large construction projects in 1984. “The projects included hydroelectric, geothermal, solar and wind power plants, hospital additions, cultural centers, tourist hotels, a gymnasium and a stadium” (Smith, p. 587). Needless to say, most, if not all, of this money did nothing to improve the livelihood of the still largely nomadic Tibetan population.

While it is true that repressive measures were adopted in several areas, especially religion, the Chinese did not squelch all aspects of Tibetan life. For instance, China chose not to abandon its economic liberalization program. Interestingly, China’s continued pursuit of the new economic policies actually bound Tibet more tightly to China than ever before by integrating the Tibetan economy with that of interior China. This, in turn, made Tibet even more inseparable from China (p. 586). Yet, regardless of the fact that Tibetans found themselves more dependent on China economically, they still longed to be free.

E. THE 1987 TIBETAN RIOTS

As previously mentioned, talks between Tibetan exiles and the Chinese terminated in 1984, but economic reforms continued unabated. By 1987, in addition to

the renewal of some repressive tactics in Tibet, another event took place that signaled a possible return to the “old” days. Hu Yaobang was removed as General Secretary because conservatives in the Beijing government believed he had been too lenient towards the Tibetans. In the wake of this political shakeup, a new, conservative approach was adopted to address the Tibetan situation, and Tibetans felt that their chances of achieving significant progress under the new policy were slim. A different method had to be found and, once again, the Tibetans turned their attention to the international arena.

The first step in this renewed effort occurred when the Dalai Lama addressed the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus on 21 September 1987. In his speech, the Dalai Lama set forth his “five-point peace plan” which he “presented as an attempt to reopen the dialogue on a more realistic basis by proposing preliminary steps to reduce tensions” (p. 601). In other words, the Dalai Lama was trying to convince China to discuss the Tibetan issue without directly challenging the Chinese position. By using this technique, he hoped China would prove more amenable to reopening dialogue, and that subsequent talks would keep emotions in Tibet from boiling over into open hostility towards the Chinese. It was a reasonable plan, but China refused to consider the proposition. Instead, the Chinese government denounced the Dalai Lama for what it considered to be yet another attempt to secure Tibetan independence.

The Chinese response angered the Tibetans, and the execution of two Tibetans, during the same timeframe, exacerbated the situation. This was more than the Tibetans were willing to tolerate. On 27 September, a group of monks protested in Lhasa, and were arrested by the Chinese. Another demonstration followed on the 1st of October to protest the monks’ arrest, and these individuals were also arrested. Then, yet another protest demanding the release of the imprisoned protesters broke out, but this time, at the police station where the men were being held. The situation soon turned violent, and several Tibetans were killed, and many others injured, while trying to release the prisoners. After this flare-up, other riots sporadically erupted in the following months, with the worst taking place in March 1988.

Following this succession of riots, the Chinese decided it was time to crush dissent in Tibet. The head of the PRC’s Public Security Police announced that he was

initiating a policy of “merciless repression” against unruly Tibetans, “which means that any attempts to demonstrate against Chinese rule—or even expression of pro-independence sentiments—will be met with extreme force and brutal punishment” (Powers, p. 183). Additionally, the Panchen Lama (who had been released from prison in 1974) and Ngawang Jigme Ngapo (the former confidant of the Dalai Lama) condemned the riots, and “called for punishment ‘according to law’” (Smith, p. 608). Liberalization in Tibet had ended. China finally realized that the consequence of providing the Tibetans with restricted freedom was unrest. Therefore, if the Tibetans would not voluntarily follow the will of the Chinese government, they would be made to do so “in order that they will come to love their ‘Han big brothers’ who are in Tibet to bring them the benefits of communism” (Powers, p. 183). However, to complicate China’s task, the Dalai Lama refused to give up trying to help his followers in Tibet.

F. THE STRASBOURG PROPOSAL

In June 1988, during a speech to the European Parliament, the Dalai Lama called for a reopening of dialogue between the Tibetan exiles and the Chinese government using a radically different approach. He stated that he was “formally accepting Deng Xiaoping’s precondition that he ‘give up the idea of Tibetan independence’” (Smith, pp. 608-609). In exchange, though, he expected China to provide Tibet with true autonomous rights using a “one country, two systems” framework. The international community saw this proposal as a true concession, a way to reopen dialogue with the Chinese, and the first step on the path to finally resolving the Tibetan issue. The Chinese, on the other hand, thought this proposal was no better than the previous one. They saw the proposition as an attempt to attain semi-independent status for Tibet, and rejected the idea. Unfortunately, as can be easily inferred from the Chinese response, none of the UN aspirations were fulfilled.

Further damaging the Dalai Lama’s cause, the Strasbourg Proposal led to the fracturing of the previously unified Tibetan community (both those in exile and in Tibet). There were some who felt the concession was an appropriate measure for restarting a process that would eventually achieve greater freedom for Tibet, and applauded the Dalai Lama’s actions. Others, however, believed the Dalai Lama was conceding too much to the Chinese, and questioned how committed the Dalai Lama and the rest of his

government in exile were to securing Tibetan goals. The hardliners did not want the Dalai Lama to strive for anything short of Tibetan independence, and opposed his one country/two systems approach.

According to Smith, the Strasbourg effort was a failure:

The Dalai Lama's Strasbourg Proposal ultimately received a favorable response neither from the Chinese at whom it was directed nor from Tibetans in whose interest it was offered. The proposal impressed only the international community, for whom the fundamental issues of sovereignty were not so important as was the Dalai Lama's spirit of concession in the resolution of international conflicts. (Smith, p. 615)

In the end, the Dalai Lama's attempt proved fruitless. Even worse, this split, caused by the Strasbourg Proposal, continues to divide the Tibetan community, and plagues all attempts made by the Dalai Lama to reach an agreement with the Chinese. Chances for reopening dialogue also rapidly diminished once the Chinese made it clear that they refused to make compromises in their position, in exchange for the Dalai Lama's concession. Finally, hope for any improvement in relations vanished completely when China declared martial law in Tibet.

G. MARTIAL LAW AND BEYOND

In March 1989, one year after a violent protest in Tibet saw several monks killed and wounded, there was a demonstration to commemorate the event. Again, the scene turned violent when Chinese police, without warning, opened fire on the protesters. The unprovoked shooting caused three days of rioting in Tibet, and led to the Chinese government's declaration of martial law on 7 March. From this point onwards, "tourists and journalists were expelled from Tibet; Tibetans from rural areas were prohibited from travelling [sic] to Lhasa without permission. Public Security Police and PAP [People's Armed Police] conducted house searches in Lhasa; thousands suspected of having played a role in the riots were arrested" (pp. 617-618). Clearly, upon instituting martial law, the liberalization program ceased to exist. Liberalization had caused too many problems, and it was time to reestablish firm control of Tibet before the situation spiraled out of control.

Even though martial law did eventually end in April 1990, after being in effect for more than a year, there was no return to liberal policies in Tibet. In fact, China maintained pressure on Tibet in order to prevent future independence demonstrations, and

to correct mistakes that had been made during the liberalization period. The first sign of this new, harsher policy was manifested in the replacement of Tibetan with Chinese authorities. In December 1992, when Chen Kuiyuan was appointed as the new general secretary for the TAR, he “immediately affirmed the policy of reliance upon direct Chinese rule in Tibet by purging Tibetans from positions of authority and bringing in Han cadres to take their place” (Smith, p. 638). The Chinese liked the return to direct rule, and decided to make the policy shift official.

The ideal opportunity to act upon this desire for direct rule presented itself in 1994. The international community had recently attempted to eliminate or, and as a minimum, reduce China’s human rights violations by tying consideration for Most Favored Nation Status to China’s human rights advancements. However, in May, the U.S. administration abandoned the effort, which started a trend. “Similar gestures by other western governments, notably France and Germany, to downplay human rights concerns took place around the same time” (Barnett, 1996). Thus, although it cannot be proven, it appears China regarded these international maneuvers as a signal that human rights was no longer a primary concern. Here was the chance to act.

Consequently, in July, the Chinese held the Third National Forum on Work in Tibet (also known as “the Third Forum”). The Third Forum established new, repressive policies that “curtail[ed] the spread of religious activity, including increased control and surveillance of monasteries” (Barnett). In addition, the Forum concluded that the local Tibetan leadership could not be relied upon to carry out the orders of the Beijing government. Further measures were required if Tibet was to be made to obey Beijing, and so the Forum “called for an increase in the transfer of Chinese cadres and former soldiers to the TAR” (Barnett). In other words, China would continue along Chen’s path by relying on direct Chinese rule in Tibet instead of using Tibetans.

In November 1995, the policies initiated at the conclusion of the Third Forum received a new addition, but this one, unlike previous measures, was aimed at Tibet’s supreme religious leader. China made an “announcement that the Dalai Lama’s influence was to be eradicated not only from politics but also from religion, suggesting a plan to restructure Buddhist belief” (Barnett). The Chinese were targeting what they knew was

the biggest obstacle to ending the Tibetan peoples' bid for independence. Their relentless effort aimed to not only remove the Dalai Lama's influence, but also that of Buddhism in general. To illustrate how seriously China took the threat from the Dalai Lama, one need merely look at the following example: "In May 1996 the Chinese reversed their policy of allowing ordinary Tibetans to keep photos of the Dalai Lama; in Lhasa, all images of the Dalai Lama were prohibited and house searches were conducted to confiscate his photos" (Smith, p. 652). The Chinese had returned to their old ways of repressing individual Tibetans, as well as traditional Tibetan institutions, in an attempt to secure control. Now, with Chinese policies regarding Buddhism fully explained, we can return to another aspect of China's program to incorporate Tibet.

In 1987, Deng devised a way to expand colonization, and this time the effort was veiled as an attempt to improve conditions for Tibetans. He decided to end the restriction on the number of Han allowed into Tibet since he said they were necessary for Tibetan development:

In the area of manpower, we need to get large numbers of Han comrades into Tibet so that they can impart scientific and technological knowhow [sic], share their scientific management expertise, and help Tibet train scientific, technological, and managerial personnel to speed up its economic development. (p. 637)

Though Tibetans did indeed lack such technical expertise, it was through no fault of their own. Few of them had been afforded the opportunity to receive advanced education from the Chinese. Therefore, on the face of it Deng's statement could sound benevolent, but it does not explain why Han then began pervading all aspects of Tibetan urban life as an article in the *Washington Post* pointed out: They "man the bars, do the shoe repairs, even sell the peaches" (Pomfret, 1999). While it may be reasonable to assume that some Han are needed in Tibet to advance major economic development projects, are Han really needed to work as bartenders or to sell peaches? According to the same article, there is an ulterior motive to allowing unrestricted Han access to Tibet. "Chinese officials speak openly of assimilating Tibetans like the Han Chinese assimilated the Manchus." The Beijing government, of course, refuses to admit that it is trying to breed the Tibetan race out of existence, but it does appear as if multi-pronged assimilation efforts are in progress. For instance, despite this influx of Han designed to assist with Tibet's

economic progress, “There has been no rapid industrial growth in the TAR” (Saunders et al.), although, as previously discussed, there has been plenty of construction and some economic gains.

This brings us to what some think is China’s present scheme for finalizing its incorporation of Tibet: “The Chinese are pursuing a strategy that presumes economic development will erode support for independence and ultimately bridge the gap between Han and Tibetan cultures” (Pomfret, 1999). This approach, however, seems to be more of a short-term goal than a vision for the distant future. In the long run, if things continue as at present, it is doubtful Tibetan culture will still exist. I see China using the tried and true method of repressing its old nemesis, Buddhism, along with pushing economic development to achieve control in the immediate future. For the long-term, though, I anticipate colonization will be the key to eliminating the Tibetan problem. For, as the years continue to pass, a colonization policy will eventually lead to total assimilation of the Tibetans, and China will finally—literally—dissolve, never mind just resolve its difficulties in Tibet. The question is: will this approach be given sufficient time to work?

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VI. TIBET IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A. RECENT EVENTS

After examining the evidence thus far, it is clear that China's consolidation of Tibet has focused on four distinct areas. The first, and the one that has existed the longest, is China's effort to build a Tibetan infrastructure. This endeavor has mostly concentrated on the construction of roads and airfields and, throughout, emphasis has been on facilitating troop movement. Next, there is religious persecution, which has been exercised to varying degrees over the decades, but never fully eliminated. Then, during the Cultural Revolution, one saw not only religious persecution, but also the forced transformation of the Tibetan economic system which was vividly brought to light with the establishment of collectivization and communes. Later, once the period of liberalization began, these institutions were abandoned, and a liberal economic policy adopted. Amazingly, even though the liberalization policy ended and repressive tactics were reintroduced in some aspects of Tibetan life, the liberal economic program continued without interruption. Also, given the effort invested to maintain economic liberalization, one can infer that this is the segment of the incorporation program that China feels is most likely to succeed, and therefore, is worthy of the most resources. Lastly, as earlier remarked, the Chinese have concentrated their attention on colonization. Although colonization, if successful, will be the last effort to show real results, it is by far China's best chance for permanently eliminating the Tibetan problem.

Thus, having briefly summarized of the steps China has taken to solve its Tibetan dilemma, we can examine Tibet's present status. By focusing on the four areas previously highlighted, we can determine where the policies have remained unchanged or have experienced recent shifts. Beginning with infrastructure, there has been plenty of recent activity. The most ambitious project is a railroad that is designed to run from the city of Golmud (in Qinghai province) to Lhasa. Construction on the 693-mile long railway, expected to cross mountain passes as high as 16,600 feet, began in 2001, and is scheduled for completion in 2007. However, this railroad is not a foregone conclusion. It is a gargantuan undertaking, certain to face numerous challenges, and will be an engineering marvel if successfully completed.

Due to its complexity, then, one has to wonder why China wants to build a railroad that will undoubtedly drain China of vast quantities of money and labor. China claims the railroad is being built for economic reasons, but some critics are skeptical. “[F]rom an economic point of view this railway really makes very little sense. It is less about economics than it is about securing political control over China’s restive Tibetan territories” (Wingfield-Hayes, 2001). Sentiments voiced in the *Los Angeles Times* (2001) also suggest ulterior motives: “The trains would allow quick deployment of troops to put down Tibetan protests like those in the late 1980s against Chinese rule and to guard the frontier with India” (Bodeen).

Examining the issue from a different perspective, one finds that Tibetans also fear the railroad. They think it will result in a marked increase in the number of Han Chinese settling in Tibet since access to the once remote region will be greatly simplified. If Tibetan concerns prove correct, activists worry that the “flood of migrants...will dilute the Himalayan region’s unique Buddhist culture while reaping most of the economic benefits” (McDonald, 2003). Thus, economic gains, supposedly generated to benefit Tibetans, will be received by Han settlers, and the already fragile Tibetan culture will be further rent. Such a scenario would be catastrophic for Tibetans because they would gain nothing from the railroad, and lose plenty. Conversely, such an outcome would go a long way in allowing China to reach its ultimate objective.

A final concern is that a railway will make transportation of Tibetan raw materials to interior China faster and more economical. Consequently, China will accelerate its extraction of Tibetan natural resources. Not only could China more efficiently extract known resources, it could also expand its program to discover new natural resources to exploit. A prelude to what might happen in Tibet is easy to find. Only weeks after announcing construction of the Qinghai-Lhasa railroad, BBC News carried an article declaring: “Chinese geologists are reported to have discovered a vast oil deposit in a remote part of northern Tibet” (“China Finds,” 2001). Clearly, if this oilfield lies along the proposed path of the railroad, it would make extraction and subsequent transport of the oil to China a simple affair. Even if the oilfield is located some distance from the railway, a trunk line connecting the oilfield to the Golmud-Lhasa line could be

constructed, and oil could still be easily transported to interior China. Additionally, if China desires, it could build a pipeline that goes from the oilfield directly to China.

Even before the oil discovery announcement, there was trouble looming on Tibet's horizon regarding natural resources. In 2000, China began discussing investment opportunities on the Tibetan plateau with international corporations. For instance, in October, British Petroleum and Shell sponsored a conference in Beijing regarding the prospects of finding significant stores of oil in Tibet. This meeting marked a turning point in the minds of many who worry about the future of Tibet's raw materials. In the opinion of the Director of the Free Tibet Campaign, "Now China is entering a new phase, consolidating its position by asking Western companies like BP to finance the exploitation of Tibet's natural resources" ("Tibet Protesters," 2000). Without doubt, there is reason for concern. If anyone can find a rapid and efficient way to extract oil from Tibet, it is massive Western oil companies, driven by profit, whose earnings depend on how well they can perform an assigned task.

In the end, even if the railroad does result in some economic benefit for Tibetans, it is obvious that its greatest utility lies in securing Chinese control over Tibet. Plus, there is the added benefit of stripping Tibet of natural resources more rapidly than currently possible, especially if Western companies become involved in the endeavor.

Despite the size and complexity of the Qinghai-Lhasa railway project, it is not the only change being made to Tibet's infrastructure. Another ongoing project, and one that is difficult to find fault with, is China's attempt to bring clean drinking water to all Tibetan villages. This endeavor, begun in 2000 and scheduled for completion in 2005, has shown some impressive results: "So far, 243,000 rural people and five million livestock in Tibet have been covered by the sanitary drinking water network" ("Project To, 2003"). Thus, it is hard to characterize all infrastructure projects as having strategic intent for China.

In addition to these two colossal projects, the Chinese plan further changes in Tibet. In 2001, the Chinese government pledged to spend \$3.8 billion on 100 construction projects, to include developing five new airports. Also, as recently as 6 March 2003, the Chinese government restated its commitment to improving Tibet's

infrastructure during the First Session of the 10th National People's Congress. During the Congress, the PRC Economic, Social Development Plan was delivered, which said, in part:

We will make funds available for key projects to ensure their successful implementation. These include the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, the projects to divert natural gas and electricity from the west to the east, key water conservancy projects, trunk highways, the Tibet-Xinjiang Project as well as projects for ecological conservation and environmental protection.

Clearly, there has not been, nor does there seem any likelihood that there will be, a letup in China's effort to improve Tibet's infrastructure. In fact, programs are multiplying. Infrastructure is certainly an ongoing Chinese concern, but is the same true of, for instance, Tibetan Buddhism?

There have been several developments in this area in recent years, but one of the most significant involves the two most senior religious leaders after the Dalai Lama: the Panchen and Karmapa lamas. After the death of the 10th Panchen Lama in 1989, the search was begun for his reincarnation. Then, in 1995, both the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama declared each had found the successor and this was not the same individual. By announcing its own candidate, China was attempting to control the future direction of Buddhism in Tibet. If successful at having their nominee accepted as the true reincarnation, the Chinese would be one step closer to making the Buddhist hierarchy conform to their will because it is the Panchen Lama who is responsible for selecting the next reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. In other words, if China could educate and indoctrinate the Panchen Lama so that he was pro-Chinese by the time he reached adulthood (he was six at the time of his discovery), he would presumably 'find' a reincarnation of the Dalai Lama that the government favored. Then, the new Dalai Lama could be educated by the Chinese in order to make *him* pro-Chinese. To start this dream on the road to reality, the Chinese officially installed their nominee as the 11th Panchen Lama in 1995, hid the Dalai Lama's choice from the public and, it is feared, placed him under house arrest.

Since these actions were taken, the Chinese government has repeatedly tried to dispel the rumor of house arrest by portraying the boy's situation positively. For

instance, according to the Beijing-appointed head of Tibet's parliament, "He is living a very happy life...He studies well at school. His parents and entire family are happy" ("China says," 2002). Yet, regardless of what this official and others have said, the fact remains that the Dalai Lama's choice for Panchen Lama has not been seen in public and remains in a secret location. However, despite China's measures, Tibetans refuse to accept the Panchen Lama the Chinese chose. "Beijing's Panchen Lama has failed to attract devotees, while photographs of the Dalai Lama's candidate are worshipped in secret throughout Tibet" (Moynihan, 2000). Tibetans believe the Dalai Lama's choice is the true reincarnation, and the Chinese will have an extremely difficult time convincing them otherwise.

China's position on the Panchen Lama controversy is that there is no controversy. For clarification, we once again return to the comments of Tibet's head of parliament: The "Dalai Lama's choice was 'totally null and void' and 'without authorisation [sic] and arbitrary'" ("China says"). Without doubt, there are strong opinions on both sides of this issue because the stakes are so high. The winner will determine who the next reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is, and it would be quite a feat if the Chinese could get the Tibetans to accept their Panchen Lama. However, chances of gaining such support appear slim while there is little question that the quandary of who is the rightful Panchen Lama will prove critical to Tibet's future.

The other player in the religious power struggle is the Karmapa Lama, and here the story is just as interesting. The Karmapa Lama has been officially recognized by both Chinese authorities and the Tibetan government-in-exile as the true reincarnation, but there is a problem. In early 2000, the teenaged Karmapa Lama fled Tibet, and was granted refugee status in India. His flight from Tibet came as a huge shock to the Chinese because they "had been grooming the fifteen year old Lama to become the pro-Beijing leader of Tibetan Buddhism and to lend legitimacy to Chinese rule over Tibet" (Wingfield-Hayes, 2000). With the Karmapa's departure, China lost control over the third most powerful lama in Tibetan Buddhism. Worse still, since the Chinese government officially recognized the Karmapa Lama, it could not replace him with someone it could control. Thus, China must deal with someone beyond its influence, and

is likely to face the same difficulties encountered with the present Dalai Lama. As *The Washington Post* (2001) said:

The Karmapa's presence in India means Tibetans in exile arguably have a young leader around whom they can rally in future years. While the Dalai Lama, 65, remains in good health, China had hoped Tibetan exiles would be left leaderless at his death. (Pomfret)

Obviously, the dream of having leaderless exiles has been shattered, and it looks like the Chinese will be forced to contend with a powerful exile community into the future. China's hopes of controlling the three most important lamas have been thwarted, and this poses a major impediment to fully controlling Buddhism in Tibet.

However, the Chinese are not relying solely on their ability to control the Dalai, Panchen, and Karmapa lamas to achieve their goals in the religious sphere. China has taken other steps to minimize the impact of Buddhism in Tibet. For example, in 1997, the Chinese instituted a new crackdown on Tibetan monks using the "Strike Hard" program. Under this new policy, the Chinese forced reeducation programs on all religious institutions in Tibet, and it is believed that "all religious heads of monasteries and nunneries in Tibet have been replaced by communist party officials" (Lloyd-Roberts, 1998). Thus, China is once again striking at the heart of what it believes is the source of unrest and continued calls for Tibetan independence. Without doubt, if religious institutions can be controlled, China stands a good chance of controlling the Tibetan population. From China's perspective, then, even though control is not as desirable as elimination of religion altogether, it is nonetheless useful.

Another measure the Chinese are pursuing is the forced retirement of older Tibetan monks. Tibetans regard this move as a serious threat to Buddhism because it is the senior monks who "play a crucial role in the transmission of religious teachings and rarely retire" ("China Orders," 1998). However, not only does retirement mean an inability to pass teachings down to the next generation of monks, it also provides the Chinese with a means to "reduce the population of Tibetan monasteries and purge monks and nuns who refuse to renounce the Dalai Lama" ("China Orders"). By reducing the total number of Tibetan monks and nuns, as well as replacing those opposed to Chinese rule, China reduces the overall influence of Buddhism on Tibetans and minimizes the

sources of continued unrest. A further consequence of these measures is that many monks and nuns have chosen to flee Tibet instead of accepting reeducation. According to one London-based Tibetan expert, “Sometimes they’ve walked out of their monasteries or nunneries, effectively closing them down. We’re seeing that happening all over Tibet now” (Miles, 1999). Essentially, religious institutions in Tibet are slowly being squeezed out of existence.

Not surprisingly, China has not restricted its efforts to eliminate Buddhism’s influence to undermining religious institutions. In the summer of 2000, China announced a program to target civilian institutions also: “Chinese state media confirms that schools and universities in Tibet have been told to step up their propaganda campaign against what it calls the ‘infiltration’ by the Dalai Lama clique” (Wingfield-Hayes, 2000). As part of this program, “Children are forbidden to engage in religious practices and are expelled from school if caught entering a temple or participating in Buddhist festivals” (Moynihan). From this example, one can see that China believes that it has to attack Buddhism on all fronts in order to eliminate it. If not, as has so often occurred in the past, Buddhism is bound to resurface.

In 2001, one final tactic to control the future of Buddhism in Tibet was revealed by the Chinese. Since the controversy over the Panchen Lama was causing so many difficulties, China determined that the next Dalai Lama would be “chosen from among several candidates by lots drawn from a golden urn” (“Tibetans denounce,” 2001). Afterwards, the Chinese government would officially ratify the name chosen from the urn, and that individual would be declared Dalai Lama. China claimed that this was a traditional way of choosing the Dalai Lama and, although true that they tried to get Tibetans to submit to this method of selecting the Dalai Lama in the past, the Tibetans then, as now, refused to accept such a process. According to a representative from the Tibet Information Network quoted in the same article, “This is an example of traditional Tibetan Buddhist procedures being hijacked by the Chinese authorities for their own political purposes” (“Tibetans denounce”).

Since China’s chances of using its officially approved Panchen Lama to determine the Dalai Lama’s successor are not promising, the “urn method” is

unmistakably another avenue China is pursuing to ensure it can control who will be the next reincarnation. Given the fact that there has already been opposition to this method, it appears inevitable that once the Dalai Lama dies there will be two candidates for his reincarnation (one approved by the Chinese and one endorsed by the Tibetans). Consequently, a struggle similar to the one presently underway regarding the legitimacy of the Panchen Lama will occur. And, as in the case of the Panchen Lama, this is not likely to be resolved quickly nor to everyone's satisfaction.

As we have seen, then, China has expended tremendous energy to reduce the influences of Buddhism and the Dalai Lama in Tibet. China undoubtedly regards religion as the biggest threat to its rule, as evident from a statement made during a meeting of Chinese authorities: “[P]articipants determined that religion is the main ‘element of destruction’ in Tibetan society because it represents ‘anti-Chinese sentiments’” (Pomfret, 2001). Yet, despite the fact it is a top priority, things have not progressed smoothly. The campaign against religion has met with numerous misfortunes, and met stiff resistance throughout. Most notably, the Karmapa Lama's flight to India completely sabotaged China's plans for Tibet's future. As a result, Beijing has worked diligently to develop an alternate plan for securing religious control, but the path ahead looks long, difficult, and the outcome remains uncertain.

Turning to China's economic policies, progress has been both significant and rapid. One of the newer approaches China is pursuing is the establishment of special economic zones (SEZs) in Tibet. The SEZ concept, designed to attract investment to the designated zone by providing a tax rate that is approximately half of that found elsewhere in China and Tibet, was put into practice in 1980. That year, a SEZ was established in Shenzhen (a region near Hong Kong), and economic growth in that area skyrocketed, far surpassing growth in the rest of China (“Tibet gets,” 2001).

Then, in late 2001, the Chinese announced plans to establish a SEZ in Lhasa with the hope that similar spectacular economic growth could be achieved there and, perhaps, Lhasa could join the ranks of modern Chinese cities. As it turns out, Lhasa has indeed begun to modernize, but whether this can be attributed to the SEZ or some other factor remains unclear. It is possible Lhasa, along with several other cities in Tibet, is

modernizing due to another program: “The central government has paired provinces in China with cities in Tibet and pushed them to invest there” (Pomfret, 1999). Regardless of the cause of economic modernization in Tibet, there is no denying that cities such as Lhasa and Shigatse, among others, are entering the modern world.

Although Tibet’s cities receive a preponderance of China’s attention, the people living in the countryside have not been forgotten. In a new agricultural program, detailed in *The Los Angeles Times* article “Progress Hems in Nomadic Herders,” the Chinese are attempting to use “technology and improved infrastructure to encourage a shift from subsistence herding to industrial livestock production” (Kuhn, 2002a). In other words, the Chinese government is using the lure of potential economic advancement to pull Tibetans away from their traditional livelihoods. Plus, according to the plan, the shift would make these rural Tibetans essentially sedentary and, consequently, easier for the Chinese government to control:

Under the new policy, nomad families sign long-term contracts to use plots of state-owned land, which are sized according to the family’s number of animals and the land’s estimated capacity for supporting livestock.

The government encourages them to build houses and barns to replace their traditional yak-hair tents, and pays part of the cost of putting up barbed-wire fences to enclose each plot. (Kuhn)

If Tibetan nomads choose to support this government program en masse, it could mean the end of a way of life that has lasted for centuries. Worse still, it could make the nomads highly susceptible to the vagaries of the Tibetan environment. “Mobility and herd diversity have traditionally been nomads’ keys to surviving these conditions by evenly allocating animals to grasslands and taking advantage of local variations in climate and vegetation” (Kuhn). However, if nomads have permanent dwellings and are literally fenced in, as this program indicates, Tibetans could suffer appalling losses when conditions are particularly tough, and they are unable to temporarily move their herds to better grazing land. Then, instead of experiencing the hoped for economic benefit, nomads will find themselves reduced to the poverty level, and potentially unable to recover from the economic downturn.

As glum as this prediction appears, the Chinese government seems unconcerned with the possible consequences, and has decided to accelerate a program aimed at changing farming and animal husbandry.

The program, code-named “117 Key Program” involves the establishment of 10 barley production bases, the improvement of natural grasslands in 12 counties and the establishment of breeding centers in 20 counties and seven cities.

It also contains a resettling project for nomadic herdsmen in 19 counties.

Currently, 3,464 livestock-breeders from nine counties have put down roots, and 319 solar wells have been built for both people and livestock. (“Central Government,” 2003)

If this program continues at its present pace, it will not be surprising if the traditional nomad, so long a hallmark of the Tibetan landscape, ceases to exist. Furthermore, China will have eliminated the most difficult sector of the Tibetan population to control, and the source of the original resistance fighters. There would no longer be a fiercely independent segment of the Tibetan population to contend with because they will have been lured into adopting a sedentary lifestyle by a wily Chinese government. In the end, China makes the agricultural program look like it is designed primarily to assist the Tibetans when, I tend to believe, its real purpose is to act as another means by which China can strengthen its hold on Tibet.

Examining Tibetan economic development objectively, it seems fair to say China has made remarkable progress, and it is no wonder money is continually poured into Tibet. As apparent from the preceding examples, the Chinese believe the best way for them to win over Tibetans is through economic prosperity: “The happiness of the average Tibetan should only increase in coming years...as investments are showered on the region” (Eckholm, 2001). So far, the Chinese plan is working, and there is an added benefit for Beijing. In exchange for increasing the welfare of the average Tibetan, China continually expands its control over Tibet. China’s economic policies in Tibet are, without doubt, progressing at a most satisfactory rate.

This brings us to the last of the means by which China has been exerting its control: colonization. As explained earlier, colonization will play a major role in

China's long-term plan to absorb Tibet. Therefore, it is extremely important to note what measures the Chinese have attempted recently, and how successful these have been.

One example of attempted colonization surfaced in July 2000, when China approached the World Bank for a loan. The Chinese wanted to use the money to resettle approximately 60,000 Chinese farmers on Tibetan land. However, once pro-Tibetan activists learned of the plan, they protested outside the bank's Washington headquarters, and provided the media with the following reason for their opposition to the resettlement: "[T]he relocation of so many Chinese in the north-west Qinghai province would leave Tibetans in the area facing cultural genocide" ("World Bank," 2000). Ultimately, the World Bank refused to grant the loan, but even this move did not slow down the Chinese. They decided to finance the project on their own. Thus, China was able to circumvent the international community's attempt to regulate colonization.

In addition to specific programs, such as the aforementioned, China is enticing Han to move to Tibet using broader measures. "Huge government subsidies are luring a wave of Chinese migrants to Tibetan cities" (Brookes, 2002a). Additionally, to facilitate this resettlement, China recently removed several restrictions that formerly prevented urban migration throughout China:

The directive, issued by the State Council, China's cabinet, says rural migrants have a 'legal right' to work in cities. It prohibits job discrimination based on residency, potentially opening all jobs to rural migrants, and orders police to provide urban residency documents to any migrant who finds employment. (Hutzler & Lawrence, 2003)

Although this directive applies throughout China, it is easy to see how it could add to the ongoing wave of Han who are seeking to resettle in Tibet. Not only can Han farmers take menial jobs in Tibetan cities that Tibetans are qualified to fill, other Han can occupy skilled professions that Tibetans are not qualified for. As a result, the majority of Tibetan cities could soon consist of populations where ethnic Chinese outnumber Tibetans. In fact this phenomenon has already occurred in Lhasa where Chinese currently outnumber Tibetans. According to one article, this continuing influx of Chinese into Tibet is a serious concern: "Migration and development are doing more than anything else to change Tibet, and to consolidate the Chinese presence" (Brookes). Therefore, it is

evident China is using colonization as yet another means for strengthening control in Tibet. Besides, what better way is there to stop unrest in an unruly region than to have your supporters outnumber the indigenous inhabitants? In the end, even though the international community, on occasion, is doing what it can to slow Chinese migration into Tibet, it is quite easy for China to sidestep these efforts. One can then say that although colonization has encountered a few minor obstacles, overall, it is proceeding at a steady pace.

Now that an overview of recent events in Tibet regarding infrastructure, religion, economic policies, and colonization is complete, this information can be used to answer the next question. What constraints and opportunities exist in present-day Tibet?

B. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

As previously discussed, at the beginning of the Tibetan insurgency, the Tibetans had numerous advantages they could have exploited. However, they were never able to fully capitalize on any of them due to a myriad of domestic and international factors. Then, as the decades passed, China systematically attacked each of these pre-existing opportunities in order to eliminate them in case there was a future Tibetan conflict.

One of the earliest and most significant advantages the Tibetans had—freedom of movement—was provided by the lack of Tibetan infrastructure. As will be recalled, when China first invaded Tibet, there was not a single road in the country, and it immediately recognized this glaring weakness in its ability to suppress Tibetan resistance. Without roads, PLA troops could not be rushed to the site of disturbances and, thus, had no effective means of population control. China did not then begin to restrict major Tibetan freedoms until after the first Tibetan roads were completed.

Even with completion of a few rudimentary roads, China soon discovered that most of the nomadic population was so dispersed in remote regions of Tibet that the roads' use was restricted to bringing troops and supplies to a central location. From these central points, it was still necessary to travel on foot to the Tibetans' locations. A further weakness identified was that the winding mountain roads were highly susceptible to guerrilla attack. Regardless of these drawbacks, though, having a means to transport

needed men and materiel, in bulk, from China to Tibet was a vast improvement over previous conditions.

Though roads represented a substantial improvement, they were not the ideal solution to the transport problem and, as resistance grew, the Chinese built scattered airfields in Tibet. With the introduction of airfields and aircraft, China was able to use aerial bombardment to attack the guerrillas instead of having to wait for ground troops to begin an assault. Then, while the aerial campaign was in progress, troops could be moved to the location, and continue the attack once the aircraft departed. As previously illustrated, this tactic was used on numerous occasions with devastating effect.

China clearly recognized the importance of roads and airfields as a means to limit guerrilla mobility and, hence, as a way to secure control in Tibet. Construction programs thus continued throughout the resistance. In fact, infrastructure construction has steadily continued since the end of the insurgency, and has recently advanced to the next level with preliminary construction of Tibet's Qinghai-Lhasa railroad. The railway, although useful for non-military purposes, appears to be another next step for increasing Chinese control because, upon completion, it will speed up the process of deploying troops from China to Tibet.

With continued expansion of the Tibetan road network, construction of new airports in various regions of Tibet, and a future railroad that slashes across the heartland of Tibet, this once great advantage afforded the Tibetans previously by a lack of infrastructure will have disappeared. The days of free movement for guerrilla operations, so prevalent in the 1950s, no longer exist. Soon, as a result of the infrastructure network, China will be able to strike at will, with minimum delay, anywhere in Tibet.

Another previous advantage that has been whittled away over time is that offered by Tibet's political system. Until the flight of the Dalai Lama in 1959, there were still many Tibetan representatives who supported the insurgency by doing all they could to thwart harmful Chinese policies even though the Tibetan government was run by the Chinese. However, as we have seen, once the Dalai Lama departed for India things changed. The Chinese began a severe crackdown, and all pretense that Tibetans had a say in the future direction of the Tibetan government was summarily abandoned. China

initiated the era of direct rule, and expunged nearly every Tibetan from government. This policy lasted until Deng Xiaoping took control of China, and instituted the liberalization period. However, this period of greater Tibetan representation came to an end after numerous revolts erupted in Tibet in the 1980s, and China determined that Tibetans could not be trusted to rule themselves. Thereafter, direct Chinese rule was reinstated, and it is only in recent years that greater Tibetan governmental representation has once again been allowed.

Interestingly, after all this time, a transformation has occurred. Whereas in the past Tibetans in government vehemently opposed Chinese rule and often fought to reestablish Tibetan independence, presently, Tibetan members of government take a different view. They still believe in doing all they can to help their fellow Tibetans, but they are no longer striving for independence. In fact, most have been educated at schools in China proper, and honestly believe Chinese Communism is the best hope for Tibet's future. Conversely, as illustrated in *The Los Angeles Times* article, "A Tale of Torn Loyalties for Tibeian Officials," they "fear retribution at the hands of the exiles. 'Tibetan cadres will come to no good end if the Dalai Lama returns'" (Kuhn, 2002b). Despite pledges the Dalai Lama and his exile government made, insisting that they would not change the present Tibetan government if allowed to return, obviously some Tibetan members of government do not believe what is being said.

Furthermore, due to modernization and economic advances in Tibet, many average Tibetans feel the government, even if ultimately controlled by China, is indeed looking out for their welfare. Consequently, they have no desire to resume an independence struggle. The observations of one young Tibetan man, whose uncle is a government official, illustrate this point: "When I was young, I thought he was stupid, and that officials' work was all for show. Now I realize that he was trying to do something for his own people" (Kuhn). Thus, public opinion, in at least some regions of Tibet, seems to be shifting. Instead of believing, as in the past, that China was merely looking to exploit Tibet, now, more and more people are of the opinion that the Chinese are honestly trying to improve Tibetan lives. Besides, the physical proof to corroborate this belief surrounds the people, and increased job opportunities, even if restricted to

manual labor, no longer restrict economic advancement to just a dream. It is now a real possibility.

In addition, opportunities previously available to individuals inside the Tibetan government, who wished to circumvent China's authority, have largely disappeared. This is a consequence of the fact that the Chinese still occupy all the key governmental positions, while Tibetans are limited to the lower rungs. Moreover, and potentially of greater importance for the future of Tibetan government, many Tibetan officials have been educated in the Chinese system and indoctrinated into believing in its ways. Many Tibetan officials no longer desire independence, and prefer to work within the established governmental framework to help their fellow Tibetans. Still more disheartening for independence-minded Tibetans, is the realization that many Tibetan officials might actually fear a change, and would work with the Chinese to prevent such changes. Not only might this mean the loss of potential support from within, but such individuals could turn out to actively oppose any insurgency.

Education and government are often intimately linked. Prior to the Chinese invasion, the only formal educational opportunities available to Tibetans were at monasteries. Therefore, the Tibetan population was largely functionally illiterate. Even though those who were not educated were then somewhat restricted in what they could do, their lack of education did not prevent them from playing a key role in Tibetan society. That whole arrangement, though, was turned upside down once the Chinese entered Tibet in 1950. During different phases of the occupation, China established some primary schools in Tibet and smaller numbers of institutions of higher learning (middle schools and technical schools). But very few Tibetans were, or continue to be, fortunate enough to attend the latter. As we have seen already, this means the overwhelming majority of Tibetans remain unqualified for employment beyond manual labor.

To compound these problems, when China first established Tibetan schools, a limited amount of the Tibetan language was taught to students in addition to Chinese. However, once Chinese repression began to gain momentum, Tibetan disappeared from the schools altogether. Since China was running Tibet, Chinese was made the official language of government and higher-level business. As odious as this reality was to

Tibetans, they knew that as long as they received a formal education with Chinese, they could advance in Tibetan society if granted the opportunity.

The problem generated by this sequence of events is that, to this day, education is still unobtainable for a large segment of Tibet's population. "By the government's count, only 44 percent of Tibetan children even start junior high school. Only paltry numbers of Tibetans receive any further education that might help them partake of an economic boom" (Eckholm). Those who are deprived of formal schooling thus continue to lose out to Chinese-educated Tibetans and Han for one simple reason: "To get a good job, you need to be able to read and write Chinese as well as to speak it" (Eckholm), and the only place to learn these priceless skills is school.

For this reason, in contrast to the past, Tibetans who lack education have a dim future indeed. Those who do not know Chinese are virtual outcasts in their own country because they do not understand the language of Tibetan government and business, and have no way to acquire the needed skills. Again, even though there may have been little opportunity in pre-invasion Tibet for acquiring formal education, at least the consequences were not thoroughly debilitating. Now, the lack of Chinese skills, which can *only* be obtained at school, eliminates all prospects for upward mobility. Education or the lack thereof, has thus gone from being a minor constraint, with limited impact, to a substantial one that strictly limits an individual's role in society.

Another opportunity that has been increasingly constrained over time is U.S. government assistance to the Tibetan people. At the height of its involvement in the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. covertly supplied arms, ammunition, and other supplies to the Tibetans, and trained guerrillas in the United States. Additionally, as a form of overt support, the U.S. helped raise the Tibetan issue at the UN, and supported the passage of Tibetan human rights resolutions. However, with the cessation of covert support, the rapprochement between the United States and China in the 1970s, and China's admittance as a permanent member of the UN's Security Council, the U.S. role was drastically reduced. Tibet virtually disappeared from the U.S. foreign policy agenda.

Then, beginning in the 1990s, interest in Tibet was rekindled. U.S. presidents were once again willing to consider the Tibetan issue, but purely from a human rights

perspective. Despite this renewed interest, however, the U.S. would only go so far in expressing its support. In an attempt to quell Chinese anxiety, on those few occasions when the President met with the Dalai Lama, it was always made clear beforehand that the Dalai Lama was being received as a great religious leader and not as a political leader. As evident from the following example, some presidents went to great extremes not to upset the Chinese during such visits:

As president, Mr. Clinton would arrange a meeting with the Dalai Lama... with other United States officials, and then ‘drop in,’ as if by chance. The arrangement fooled no one, but enabled the United States to tell Beijing that the religious leader did not have a formal appointment with the president. (Sanger, 2001)

The Clinton administration was definitely concerned with China’s perception of and subsequent reaction to these meetings. It appeared that U.S. concern for the plight of Tibetans was of secondary importance to maintaining harmonious relations with China.

With the arrival of the new George W. Bush administration, a slight change has taken place in Tibetan policy. President Bush’s administration still publicly supports “unique religious, cultural and linguistic identity and the protection of the human rights of all Tibetans” (“US backs,” 2001). Likewise, it has followed in the footsteps of the Clinton administration by continuing to publicly reaffirm that it will not advocate Tibetan independence. But at least the Bush administration is more forthcoming about its support.

In a May 2001 speech to the American Jewish Committee, Bush vowed to “put the White House imprimatur on a campaign to stop the conduct of business as usual with regimes that practice or condone religious persecution” (Kempster, 2001). Bush specifically mentioned China in this address, and said that the continuation of such practices would prevent China from achieving great power status. However, he did stop short of saying the United States would “suggest economic or political sanctions against regimes that persecute believers, although he pledged to focus international attention on abuses” (Kempster). Therefore, even though Bush has clearly delineated the bounds of potential U.S. involvement, he has also put China on notice. Business as usual will not

be ignored, and now, for the first time in many years, the probability that the U.S. will provide some type of aid to the Tibetans has risen.

In contrast to the U.S., the UN has become even more constrained in its approach to Tibet over time. As we have seen, the UN did pass some Tibetan human rights resolutions, but nothing regarding the independence of Tibet has been passed or even discussed. In fact, there has not been a Tibetan resolution passed at the UN since 1965, and there is not much hope that the Tibetan issue will be raised in the future. Reasons for this pessimistic prediction are numerous, but most notable is the fact that China is now not only a member of the UN itself, but one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Therefore, if a Tibetan resolution were to come before the Security Council, China could simply veto it, and the resolution would die.

Additionally, the UN seems overly concerned to avoid offending the Chinese. There are two specific examples that are worth mentioning to show how extreme UN reaction can be to Tibetan attendance at political and non-political events. The first was an attempted maneuver by Spain:

In a victory for China, a United Nations committee voted to exclude a group seeking self-determination for Tibet from attending a conference on development planned in August. Spain had proposed including the group, the International Campaign for Tibet, but China's motion to block admittance was approved, 93 to 44, with 16 abstentions. ("Committee Bars," 2002)

Without doubt, China viewed this as a political move to undermine its control over Tibet, and responded as expected. What is interesting to note here is that so many other countries voted with China to bar the group from participating (but not the United States). There are several reasons why such a group would be barred by the UN, including the belief that self-determination for Tibet is not a valid issue, but there is also the very real possibility that many representatives voted as they did so as not to upset China. Whatever the reason for supporting China, this example shows that there is no broad-based support at the UN for pursuing the Tibetan issue.

However, opposition to Tibetan involvement does not end with political concerns. In 2000, the UN sponsored the Millennium World Peace Summit, which was attended by

more than a thousand world religious leaders, but barred the Dalai Lama from attending. The Dalai Lama, undoubtedly a world religious leader, was denied participation in the conference because Chinese pressure was applied. According to one member of the Tibetan government-in-exile, such action is inexcusable:

When he [the Dalai Lama] is excluded it undermines the credibility of the conference and the image of the United Nations...It is wrong for such a conference to be politicised [sic] and the UN to be weak and give in to pressure. ("Dalai Lama Snubbed," 2000).

Inexcusable or not, the fact remains that the UN caved in to China on an issue that was non-political. Therefore, if the UN is unwilling to allow Tibetan participation at non-political events, as well as bar the airing of Tibetan issues during political proceedings, it is evident that the chances of getting the UN to pass a future Tibetan resolution are slim indeed. Obviously, the UN, which provided Tibet with only minimal opportunities in the past, cannot be relied upon for future assistance.

After examining opportunities that became progressively constrained over time and, in some cases, eliminated altogether by China, it is important to investigate previous constraints that have recently become opportunities due to Chinese actions. Unfortunately, few opportunities have arisen due to China's Tibet policy, but there is one worth noting. In the past few years, China has shown a greater willingness to engage in discussions with the Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile. This "thaw," as it has been called, began in 2002, when high-ranking members of the Tibetan government-in-exile were invited to visit Beijing and Lhasa. This invitation and subsequent visit were breakthroughs because they were the first official communication with the Dalai Lama since the Chinese severed relations in 1993, and the first time senior Tibetan representatives had traveled to China since 1984.

This sudden reversal in China's policy seems to have been brought about, in part, by a pamphlet written two years earlier by a Chinese author. The pamphlet, entitled "The Dalai Lama is the key to the future," "argued that a fragmented Tibetan exile movement without a leader would make it more difficult for Beijing to close a deal on Tibet" (Pomfret, 2002). Apparently, the government believed the author's theory, and decided

to change Tibetan policy. As a result, prospects for working out a compromise between the Dalai Lama and Beijing are higher now than they have been in a long time.

Evidence of this renewed hope can be found in the article, “Tibet envoy hints at China thaw,” released by BBC News following the envoy’s trip to China:

He said he had frank and cordial talks. He said direct contact was now re-established between the Chinese leadership and the Dalai Lama, and that Chinese officials had shown much greater flexibility than before. (Brookes, 2002b)

The Dalai Lama also seems encouraged by recent developments with China as indicated in one of his recent statements:

I was pleased that the Chinese government made it possible for my envoys to visit Beijing to re-establish direct contact with the Chinese leadership and to also visit Tibet to interact with the leading local Tibetan officials. The visit of my envoys last September to Beijing provided the opportunities to explain to the Chinese leadership our views on the issue of Tibet. I was encouraged that the exchanges of views were friendly and meaningful. (2003)

As encouraging as these developments first appear, one must keep in mind that just because China is willing to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama’s representatives does not mean it is willing to grant Tibet greater autonomy. In fact, the opposite is true. China has made it clear that “it will not fundamentally change the nature of its rule in Tibet and is willing only to negotiate a deal over the role the Dalai Lama will be allowed to play” (Pomfret, 2002). Therefore, even though official contact between the Dalai Lama and Beijing has resumed and such a move does somewhat lift the previous constraint, there is no reason to expect a radical shift in China’s Tibet policy in the near future.

There is also reason for cautious optimism elsewhere. One other constraint that is presently being loosened in Tibet is governmental administration. The crackdown instituted by Chen in 1992 has been eased. In October 2000, Chen was replaced by Guo Jinlong, who is more tolerant of Tibetan cultural observances and Buddhism, and he has made visible changes. Tibetan culture once again became more prevalent throughout Tibet, and the new government shifted its focus to Tibet’s economic advancement.

Tibetan experts take the replacement of Chen as a positive indicator, and think the recent easing of restrictions “is a tacit acknowledgment by Beijing that Chen’s policies to crush Tibetan Buddhism and culture were discredited” (Pomfret, 2001). This statement may be true, but it is no guarantee that if Tibetans start waging widespread protests, following this most recent relaxation of restrictions, that China will not immediately reinstate severe repressive measures. Therefore, even though governmental constraints have been loosened in Tibet, there is every reason to believe that this limited opportunity will disappear if Tibetans are not careful.

A final area that needs to be examined is opportunities that have arisen that are not a direct consequence of China’s Tibetan policy. The first of these is the result of technological advancement, and revolves around the fairly new worldwide phenomenon known as the Internet. The Internet was first introduced to Tibet in 1997 and, although its use is still minimal, it has been catching on. The reason for increasing Tibetan Internet usage is that costs continue to decrease so that it becomes more affordable to a larger segment of the urban population. For example, when the first Web lounge was opened in Lhasa in 1997, an hour of computer time cost \$7.50. Not surprisingly, such an exorbitant price restricted Internet usage to tourists. However, by 2001, six-dozen Internet cafes were open in Lhasa, and the price had dropped to a more manageable 60 cents an hour (Gluckman, 2001). Needless to say, Internet use has skyrocketed.

What effect has this had on Tibet? According to one Internet café manager, the impact has been tremendous: “Because of the Internet, we in Tibet aren’t isolated from the rest of the world. [Our isolation] has been our fate for centuries, and was one reason China could take over”. He then added, “This has totally turned things around for Tibet. Before, nobody knew about us or cared. Now, we’re connected” (Gluckman). Not only can the world learn about what has happened and, continues to happen, in Tibet, Tibetans are also able to receive news about the outside world. Access to this information is possible because China does not impose the same level of Internet censorship in Tibet as is found in the rest of China. Therefore, those fortunate enough to access the Internet can visit the Dalai Lama’s site and other pro-Tibetan sites with ease.

The utility of this newfound opportunity has not escaped the Dalai Lama either. In February 2000, he conducted his first, live, online interview in which he answered, via video-phone, questions e-mailed from around the world. During the interview, the Dalai Lama expressed what he felt were the benefits of the Internet: “It will make clear what is truth, what is reality and what is false propaganda” (Dalai Lama makes,” 2000). The Dalai Lama understands that this new technology can be harnessed to inform the rest of the world about the ongoing Tibetan predicament, and to provide inspiration to his followers in Tibet. Without doubt, the Internet is a marvelous tool, and could eventually play a larger role in Tibet’s future as the number of Tibetans using it steadily increases. However, it is quite likely that, as Internet use expands, the Chinese government will recognize this flaw in its campaign to minimize the Dalai Lama’s influence, and impose comprehensive Internet censorship in Tibet.

A final opportunity that has presented itself to the Tibetan cause comes from an unexpected source. The Taiwanese government, a long time antagonist of the PRC but, until recently a staunch believer that Tibet is a part of China, has been building stronger ties with the Tibetan government-in-exile since the Dalai Lama made his first trip to Taiwan’s capital, Taipei, in 1997. The first visible sign of these improved relations was the establishment, in Taiwan, of the Tibet Religious Foundation of the Dalai Lama in 1997. Most recently, there was also the inauguration of the Taiwan-Tibet Exchange Foundation in January 2003. This newest foundation is designed to “promote exchanges between Taiwan and the Dalai Lama’s government in various fields, including tourism, education, human rights and humanitarian assistance” (Lai, 2003). In addition to displaying open friendliness towards the Dalai Lama and his government, Taiwan is thereby taking concrete measures to help the Tibetan cause.

Of course, it must be remembered that Taiwan and Tibet have long-standing issues with China that both would like to see resolved in their favor. It is thus mutually beneficial that these two unlikely allies band together against the common foe, at least until victory can be achieved. As long as this opportunity remains, the Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile must capitalize on Taiwan’s support to increase their probability of attaining greater autonomy from China. Taiwan is likely to be Tibet’s strongest ally in the immediate future because it has nothing to lose by supporting Tibet. Consequently,

Taiwan should be able to continue to supply Tibet with concrete forms of support instead of just well-intentioned words. At the very least, this relationship could be used as the Dalai Lama's bargaining chip with China because he could promise to terminate relations with Taiwan in exchange for true Tibetan autonomy.

Clearly, the Dalai Lama and Tibetans living in Tibet have to learn how to maneuver within this less repressive new Chinese regime without raising China's ire. Specifically, the Dalai Lama and his government must take advantage of all the help they can get and, by every means possible, disseminate the story of Tibet's continued repression to all who will listen. Additionally, Tibetans in Tibet have to be discreet when it comes to future activities against the government, or they will quickly be crushed and imprisoned, as has happened on numerous occasions in the past.

C. INTERNAL RESISTANCE

Most Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule has taken an active form such as the riots of the late 1980s and, in the past few years, scattered bombings in southwestern China. Unfortunately for Tibetans, these acts have been dealt with brutally, and have not generated widespread Tibetan support of an active sort. The most recent examples of Chinese punishment for such acts occurred in January 2003, when a Tibetan convicted of participating in bombings from 1998 until 2002 was executed, and a Tibetan monk received a suspended death sentence after being accused of involvement with bombings. Obviously, active resistance in Tibet is too difficult to conduct, resulting in repressive conditions against all Tibetans and the death or extended imprisonment of those individuals directly involved.

One Tibetan monk living in exile, Samdhong Rinpoche, has closely tracked events in Tibet, and believes it is time for a change in strategy. He thinks there should be "a mass noncooperation campaign within Tibet to challenge and maybe flummox Beijing through Gandhi-style passive resistance instead of confrontational protest" (Crossette, 2002). He is currently working with his committee to develop such a plan, but knows the task will not be easy. Tibetans will have to change their current mindset if his plan is to work.

At this moment, they do not know how to resist in a nonviolent way
...They resist with the slogan of 'Independent Tibet' or something like

that, and within a few hours they end up in torture or imprisonment and there is nothing they can continue with. (Crossette)

Additionally, more Tibetans will have to participate in nonviolent action if the program is to succeed. If involvement is not substantial, China will not be “flummoxed” by the activities of the few, thus denying the campaign its ultimate goal. Furthermore, if participation is limited, the Chinese can still easily arrest and imprison all involved. Conversely, if a large percentage of the population in Lhasa, for example, were to participate, it would be impossible for the Chinese to arrest everybody and still keep the city functioning. Therefore, Tibetans could express their dissatisfaction with Chinese rule and stand a better chance of escaping imprisonment than if they were to directly challenge the Chinese in an independence protest.

Samdhong Rinpoche also sees this new approach being useful for other purposes. For instance, it can be used to stop the flow of Han into Tibet.

[T]here is still some hope, because the Chinese populations were until now concentrated in pockets, and there are a huge number of small villages and remote nomads not affected by this population change. What I’m trying to do is to keep those pockets clean. That can be done through noncooperation and nonviolent resistance. (Crossette)

Samdhong Rinpoche’s plan sounds good in theory, and seems like the best way to hinder China’s incorporation scheme, but as of yet, there have been no actions in Tibet reflecting his program of mass, nonviolent resistance. However, it is something to watch for in Tibet’s future.

Since a widespread nonviolence campaign has not yet been instituted in Tibet, are there other forms of resistance presently in use? There are, and the first example incorporates passive resistance, as Samdhong Rinpoche advocates, but on a smaller scale. In some areas of Lhasa, one can find nightclubs that have a decidedly Tibetan flair:

The clubs are decorated in traditional Tibetan style, with religious symbols on walls. The performers, illuminated by flashing disco lights, wear colorful Tibetan dress as they sing old folk songs or new Tibetan pop, throwing in a few Chinese favorites, too. (Eckholm)

Although at first glance these nightclubs may not seem like much in the way of passive resistance, they are a beginning. The clubs demonstrate that Tibetans are not going to let

their society and traditions be replaced by Chinese ones. They are still proud of their heritage, and are going to continue to resist Chinese influence to the utmost of their ability. True, the nightclubs are but a small start on the road to mass passive resistance, but perhaps they are also a sign of larger things to come. This could certainly be the case if Samdhong Rinpoche is able to get the Tibetans to adopt and implement his plan en masse.

However, this spark of optimism must be tempered with concern based on other approaches taken by Tibetans in Tibet. As stated earlier, Tibetans are split on whether they want to accept the Dalai Lama's "one country/two systems" approach or pursue independence. Those in favor of independence tend to be more militant in their attitude, and appear to be contemplating a violent route to achieving their goal. For example, there are rumors that a new group of independence fighters, the Young Tigers, has formed in Tibet but, not surprisingly, evidence of this group's existence is not easy to find. If proof was available, it is quite likely China would track down the group and destroy it before it could cause damage. Nevertheless, just rumors that there is such a group justifies considering the possibility, because it clearly indicates that not all Tibetans are willing to wait for a nonviolent approach to succeed.

One author worries that a Tibetan-style intifada might emerge in which independence fighters use terrorism against the Chinese both within Tibet and China proper.

Financed from the outside, with Tibetans travelling [sic] into Tibet on Korean, Taiwanese or Indian passports, this would involve the full range of terrorist missions: bombings and assassinations...If the Tibetans were willing to engage in suicide bombings in the manner of the Palestinians, there would be little the Chinese government could do to stop them. (Wolff, 1997)

Though certainly a possible scenario, Ms. Wolff's vision seems a bit farfetched. To begin with, even though terrorism is used to obtain political objectives and could therefore serve a purpose in Tibet, it is normally directed against noncombatants in order to achieve the greatest impact. I think there are two reasons Tibetans would find it extremely difficult to target individuals they considered innocent. First, Buddhism abhors violence, and Tibetans previously used violence against China only as a last resort

when the Chinese were trying to destroy Buddhism. Second, even though Tibetans did use violence during their insurgency against the Chinese, they never attacked or killed anyone other than PLA soldiers. The fact that they were engaged in a struggle for survival at the time and limited their attacks to combatants only suggests they would not target civilians now when their religious survival is not stake. This leads me to believe that Tibetans fighting for independence would be extremely reluctant to adopt a widespread terrorism campaign. Even if targeting was limited to Chinese combatants, it would be nearly impossible to avoid inflicting occasional civilian collateral damage, and the thought of inadvertently taking innocent lives would be more than all but the most fanatical would be willing to accept. Any chance of gaining popular support would be thwarted and, because one of terrorism's goals is to gain public support, the terrorists would hamper their own efforts.

If we accept that the adoption of a widespread terror campaign seems remote, it is more likely that any violence would consist of independence fighters attacking Chinese troops in small unit actions at a time and place when the Tibetans had the advantage. In other words, they would employ classic guerrilla tactics. Any other military action would almost certainly result in Tibetan annihilation at the hands of the more numerous and better equipped PLA.

If the goal is to obtain a concession from the Chinese, akin to the Dalai Lama's "one country/two systems" proposal, the indirect nonviolent path seems the more likely candidate for adoption. That is, at least as long as those prone to pursuing violent methods do not feel that Tibet's only chance lies with adopting violence. The real factor determining whether Tibetans will adopt a nonviolent or violent campaign boils down to how the population is split regarding its goal for Tibet. If more Tibetans side with the Dalai Lama, it seems his limited aims could be achieved using nonviolent means. If, on the other hand, the majority desires independence, then the only realistic way to attaining this goal (if at all possible) is through violent means because, throughout its occupation, China has left no doubt that it refuses to grant Tibet independence. Tibet will have to be forcibly stripped from China.

Having examined internal resistance measures—both those already used and ones that might be employed in the future—it is now time to focus on one final issue. While the internal Tibetan struggle goes on in its various forms, what is the rest of the world doing to aid the Tibetan cause?

D. EXTERNAL RESISTANCE

There have been sporadic outbursts around the world condemning China's behavior in Tibet, but these have been mostly limited to private individuals and groups. A few examples will help identify the different ways concern has been expressed in the past, and how it might continue to be voiced in the future. In 1998, the Chinese navy's first official visit to Australia was seized by pro-Tibetan activists as an opportunity to protest China's human rights abuses in Tibet. "As the flotilla of three warships sailed into Sydney Harbour [sic], one of the protesters...climbed aboard the lead destroyer Qingdao shouting 'Free Tibet'" ("Tibet protests," 1998). The individual was quickly handed over to the police, and the flotilla's visit proceeded as if nothing had happened. The ships did not cut short their visit, and there was no change in China's Tibet policy. In other words, nothing of consequence resulted from the protest.

However, a different form of resistance has had more impact. In 1998, Hollywood released the film *Kundun* which tells the story of the Dalai Lama's life in Tibet until he fled to India. "Kundun depicts a medieval paradise where the people and their leader were united in a unique spiritual and cultural harmony. That...was destroyed by the Chinese invasion" (Cinema battle," 1998). Obviously, China was not happy with this film since it contradicted the official story that the Chinese move into Tibet in 1950 had been a peaceful liberation of an oppressed people. Unfortunately no matter how upset the Chinese were with the film, they could not stop its release. Consequently, millions of people around the world saw what had really happened during China's invasion of Tibet. Then, in order to counter the damage produced by this movie, China released its own film version of what happened when it invaded Tibet. Whether or not the movie-going public believed China's version is hard to say. What is certain, however, is that the Dalai Lama is pleased that Hollywood continues to support the Tibetan cause. "Of course I appreciate it very much. Through film you can reach millions of people" ("Cinema battle").

Though such movies are helpful in promoting awareness of Tibet and provoke responses from China, the real question is will they result in worldwide demand for change in Tibet or for significant increases in pro-Tibet activities? There does appear to be some proof that the movie Kundun may have led to more pro-Tibetan activities. In June 1998, three days of pro-Tibet events in Washington, D.C. culminated in a march to Capitol Hill where tens of thousands lobbied for talks between exiled Tibetan leaders and officials in Beijing (“Tibet Demo,” 1998). Additionally, in September, the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner, Mary Robinson, made a two-day visit to Tibet to investigate conditions in the region. She described her trip as the beginning of “a gradual process of fostering better human rights in China” (“Robinson visits,” 1998).

It is therefore possible Kundun played some role in these two events, especially given the fact that the sudden surge in Tibetan activity soon disappeared. It is likely that activity tapered off once the vivid images in the film were replaced by the next blockbuster or political cause in the spotlight at the time. Nevertheless, it does appear that movies could play a key role in explaining the story of Tibet and in garnering support for pro-Tibetan activities, but this has to be an ongoing process. The world’s collective consciousness, constantly bombarded by a myriad of images that demand its attention, needs to be regularly reminded of important issues. Otherwise, they are quickly forgotten.

Other forms of resistance are hinged to Hollywood and the entertainment business in general. For example, several prominent American actors, including Richard Gere and Goldie Hawn, have become staunch supporters of the Dalai Lama. In fact, Gere has established the Gere Foundation which he uses to promote awareness of the Tibetan cause. Additionally, rock stars have joined the effort. One of the most active of these supporters is British singer Annie Lennox, who delivered a petition to the Chinese Embassy in London calling for the release of a Tibetan dissident. But her gesture proved fruitless. “Unfortunately, the embassy officials put the petition in the bin in front of her” (“Celebrities mark,” 1999).

On another front, with the introduction of the Internet, numerous pro-Tibet websites have been developed. These sites include those of the official Tibetan

government-in-exile and private organizations. The sites provide a vast array of information about Tibet, books that can be purchased to learn even more about Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, and several have even made it possible for people to donate money directly to the Tibetan cause. Thus, the websites serve a dual purpose. First, as long as the individual has access to the Internet, they make information regarding Tibet readily available worldwide. Consequently, the sites are helping to spread awareness about Tibet to a massive audience without people needing to expend effort. Second, websites that provide a means to donate money are collecting funds that can be used to pursue other methods of resistance or to keep the exile government financially stable. Either way, the contributions provide Tibetan organizations with much needed money.

Though much of the external resistance is driven by private individuals and organizations, there are other sources. While it is true that there has never been a systematic and comprehensive effort by the world's nations to put pressure on China to grant Tibet independence or, and as a minimum, ensure greater Tibetan autonomy, there have been isolated instances of government action. For example, in 1997, the Australian Senate demanded that the government appoint a special coordinator for Tibetan affairs. China, always on the lookout for people meddling in its affairs, quickly responded by condemning the idea, and hinted that such a move could harm relations between the two countries. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman explained his country's position: "We strongly resent the fact that the Australian Senate passed an act designed to interfere in China's internal affairs" ("China condemns," 1997). China was not about to meekly accept a measure raised by a foreign government that threatened its control over Tibet.

Another example, this time highlighting how China refuses to allow even the occasional comment regarding Tibet to pass unmentioned, occurred in 1999 when Japan's new governor of Tokyo took office. On his first day in office, the governor criticized China: "From the standpoint of human rights, I cannot agree with its inhumane policy on Tibet" ("Tokyo governor," 1999). Officials in Beijing responded to this statement with their own that attempted to tarnish the governor's character by bringing up controversial quotes he had made in the past.

Finally, as we saw earlier, both the U.S. and Taiwanese governments have made statements supporting the Dalai Lama and Tibetan human rights and culture. As to be expected, China was quick to accuse Taiwan and the United States of interfering in internal Chinese matters. Also, despite these governmental actions, there has not been any major Chinese policy shifts, although Tibetans definitely appreciate the show of support for their cause. Unfortunately, the scarcity of examples of governments actively supporting Tibet, given the number of countries in the world, does not bode well for Tibet's future. If the world wants China to seriously consider the Tibetan issue, more coordinated international pressure will have to be brought against China. Otherwise, China will continue to do as it pleases because there are no meaningful consequences to dissuade it from following its current Tibetan policy. To change the existing situation, many countries will have to unite to pressure China for change or, and as a minimum, the great powers of the world will have to come together to convince China to alter its policy. However, neither possibility seems likely. Too many countries are either worried about upsetting China, or fear losing potential profits should they be shut out of China's growing economy.

One might conclude, after examining recent events in Tibet and taking note of the potential thaw in Sino-Tibetan relations, that now offers a time to peacefully resolve the Tibetan issue in a way that would satisfy both the Dalai Lama and Beijing. If such an effort were to fail, on the other hand, as has occurred in the past, and Tibetans consider the possibility of using violence, before taking their step, they must first take into account several factors. There is, to begin with, the harsh reality of indifference displayed by the world's governments and a history of limited involvement. Then, there is the modest impact of private external resistance. Finally, Tibetans must consider the internal conditions in Tibet. Then, after weighing these factors, Tibetans must answer two important questions: Could an insurgency in Tibet triumph as things now stand? If not, what conditions would be necessary for an insurgency to succeed?

VII. CONCLUSION

A. THE BIG PICTURE

As we have seen, the trail leading to the Tibetan insurgency originated in Tibet's earliest days, and is rather complex. One could argue, as Tibetans do, that their independence can be traced back to 822 when Tibet concluded a peace treaty with the T'ang dynasty, recognizing both combatants as equal entities. Clearly, at that time, Tibet was a great power, and could not be construed as being a part of China.

However, with the end of the age of empire and the establishment of a Buddhist state, Tibet's status and outlook changed. The militaristic spirit of the country was replaced with love and compassion for others, and Tibet became less willing to defend her freedom and religion. In other words, Tibet became vulnerable to outside aggressors. First to take advantage of this new weakness was the Mongol empire, and the only way Tibet was able to maintain its sense of independence was to establish the Cho-Yon relationship with the Mongols. As explained in Chapter II, the unique nature of Cho-Yon relied heavily upon the personalities of the secular and religious leaders and, fortunately for Tibet, when Cho-Yon was first instituted, the Mongol ruler decided not to adopt direct rule and Tibet remained separate but equal. Nevertheless, Cho-Yon established a bad precedent: Tibetan reliance upon a foreign patron to provide physical security. As can well be imagined, if a secular leader decided to use Cho-Yon to his advantage, it could mean disaster for Tibet, and eventually this is exactly what happened.

Beginning in the seventeenth century, with the Manchu dynasty, China started using Cho-Yon to its advantage. The Manchu ruler did not intend to adopt Buddhism, so the Dalai Lama was unable to provide his traditional service in exchange for protection. In fact, the Manchu leader continued with Cho-Yon for the sole purpose of using Tibet's influence with the Mongols to prevent the Mongols from rebelling against the Manchus. Then, once the Mongol threat was removed, the Manchus, found themselves able to play a larger role in Tibetan affairs, and established *ambans* in Tibet who formed a joint leadership with the Dalai Lama. China eventually discovered that even this arrangement was not sufficient, something they learned the hard way given the Gurkhas' invasion of

Tibet in the eighteenth century. China then declared suzerainty over Tibet and, despite the collapse of the Ch'ing empire shortly thereafter, maintained her claim to suzerainty even though nothing could be done to enforce it.

However, nothing was done to threaten it either. Even after China lost effective control over Tibet in the era known as the Great Game and despite the fact that Great Britain was in a position to grant Tibet independence after Younghusband's expedition, Tibet was not made an independent country. The world's nations continued to accept and respect China's claims of suzerainty. Worse, the term suzerainty was omitted from the agreements signed by China and Great Britain in 1906 regarding Tibet and, since there was nothing in writing delineating China's role, she reserved the right to exert her authority and act as Tibet's sovereign once she became powerful enough to do so. Simultaneously, the international community accepted China's claim that she should play some role in the governance of Tibet, but was unsure what that role should be. Given so much ambiguity and the fact that the international community never attempted to recognize Tibet as an independent country, trouble was now essentially built into the Chinese-Tibetan relationship.

Trouble first surfaced in 1950 when now-Communist China invaded Tibet to reclaim its lost territory. As China invaded, the world simply watched events unfold because it was unsure whether or not China had overstepped its rights as a suzerain power. Given this breathing space, China quickly eliminated the weak Tibetan resistance, and forced the Dalai Lama's representatives to sign the 17-Point Agreement in 1951. However, even after his representatives accepted the 17-Point Agreement, this was still not considered official until the Dalai Lama himself approved it. During the time available to him to deliberate, the Dalai Lama sought assistance from the United States, but an impasse developed. The U.S. would only grant the Dalai Lama assistance if he went into exile. The Dalai Lama, however, would only consent to flee his country if the United States provided him with a written guarantee that it would help the Tibetans fight for independence. Neither side proved willing to trust the other so the Dalai Lama reluctantly accepted the 17-Point Agreement. Basically, then, by finally accepting the Agreement, the Dalai Lama officially recognized China's sovereignty over Tibet and, by

so doing, sounded the death knell of Tibet's quest for independence according to international law.

The story may have ended here if China had decided to follow the provisions of the 17-Point Agreement. But as Tibet's infrastructure developed, China began to expand its control and increased its authoritarianism until the Tibetans finally refused to continue to peacefully accede to brutal Chinese measures. Small resistance groups arose among the traditionally independent nomads of eastern Tibet, and a major step forward was taken by the freedom fighters in late 1956 when they formed the Chushi Gangdruk (the first nationwide resistance movement). Also, at approximately the same time, President Eisenhower again expressed interest in the Tibetan cause.

From this point onward, the United States supported the Tibetan resistance effort with increasing vigor. The CIA was placed in charge of the overall plan and Operations ST CIRCUS and ST BARNUM were born. During the first stage of operations, while guerrillas were based in Tibet, arms, ammunition, and other needed supplies were airdropped to the Tibetans. Additionally, the U.S. established a covert guerrilla training base for the Tibetans at Camp Hale in Colorado. However, just when U.S. assistance started gaining momentum, the insurgency suffered several major setbacks. First, and probably most significantly, in 1959 the Dalai Lama felt compelled to enter exile in India. He no longer thought he could help his people by remaining in Tibet, and determined that he could better serve his followers without since once outside Tibet, he could explain the plight of his fellow countrymen to the world, and hopefully gain UN support.

However, little did the Dalai Lama realize that with his departure the last constraint on Chinese activities had been removed. China proceeded to unleash severe retaliatory measures against the Tibetans, including the imposition of martial law (for the first time), and the ruthless repression of all Tibetan resistance. Needless to say, the guerrillas were a top priority during this phase, and the Chinese went after them with a vengeance.

Although China had begun its campaign against the Tibetan guerrillas prior to the Dalai Lama's departure, this became relentless once the Dalai Lama ceased to be a factor in China's decision-making process. Tibetans were given no respite and, once a group of

suspected guerrillas was located, it was first bombed from the air, and then obliterated by PLA ground troops. Under this kind of intense pressure, the remaining insurgents were forced to flee Tibet, at which time they began the search for another location from which to continue the struggle. That new location, as we learned, was in the Mustang region of Nepal.

Once relocated, it may have appeared as though the resistance would soon be ready to resume operations. However, the Tibetan cause suffered another debilitating blow in 1960 when a U.S. U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down, and President Eisenhower suspended all covert flights. As a result, just when Tibetan insurgents needed the U.S. most, they were cut off from aid. Nonetheless, Tibetans continued to clamor for assistance, and the United States finally relented when conditions at Mustang became critical during the winter of 1960-1961.

In early 1961, to alleviate the guerrillas' suffering, recently inaugurated President Kennedy approved two airdrop missions to resupply the Mustang force. But these turned out to be the only two. According to the agreement it had reached with the insurgents, the U.S. would only supply equipment if the Tibetans established bases in Tibet, and this was not happening. Instead, the guerrillas were staging out of Mustang. Therefore, since the Tibetans were not fulfilling their end of the bargain, the United States felt no obligation to live up to its end, and the guerrillas began to languish. Meanwhile, China increased its presence along the Tibet-Nepal border, which grew progressively stronger.

Again, though, the U.S. relented, and conducted one final airdrop mission in 1965. By this time, though, the damage had been done, and it was too late to save the steadily declining resistance which continued to face obstacle after obstacle. For instance, the formation of the Special Frontier Force, in the aftermath of the Sino-Indian Border War of 1962, siphoned men off from the Mustang force as well as reduced the pool of eligible recruits. This would not have caused too much damage if the SFF had been used to wage the guerrilla war as originally envisioned. But instead, this highly trained, well-equipped force was almost exclusively restricted to performing border guard duties in preparation for a feared Chinese invasion.

Then, too, the Johnson administration shifted foreign policy priorities. As the conflict in Vietnam escalated, this demanded more and more of Johnson's time, and Tibet began to slip from the administration's covert spotlight. Also, the United States began to believe that this group of steadily aging guerrillas would be no match for the PLA in Tibet, and any hope for carrying on a Tibetan independence movement rested with the SFF. As a result, the U.S. eventually withdrew all support from the Tibetan guerrillas, and allowed the Mustang force to wither and die. The insurgency then reached its ignominious conclusion in 1974 when the last leader of the Mustang force was killed in a gun battle with the PLA while he and a small group of followers tried to cross the Indian border.

With the end of the insurgency, China went to work consolidating its control over Tibet so that a future insurgency against Chinese rule would never again be possible. The Chinese plan, as we learned, consisted of four distinct components: build up Tibet's infrastructure, persecute Buddhists and undermine Buddhism, bolster the economy, and introduce Han settlers. The infrastructure buildup began during the insurgency with the frenzied efforts of the Chinese to establish a primitive road network and a few military airfields. Then, after the insurgency ended, China continued building up Tibetan infrastructure by constructing additional roads and airfields, as well as initiating other major projects. This effort, ongoing since the Chinese invasion, shows no sign of abating as China continues to pour money into Tibetan infrastructure projects, with a prime example being Tibet's first railroad.

Religious persecution, likewise began during the insurgency. As explained, this facet of consolidation has gone through several phases, and run the gamut from a total ban on Buddhism and religious symbols to periods of leniency where limited Tibetan Buddhist practices have been permitted. Most recently, though, religious restrictions have been eased but, as evident from past Chinese actions, if Tibetans choose to resume independence protests there is every reason to believe severe religious persecution will be quick to follow.

The next component in China's consolidation plan has involved the economy. In order to strengthen its hold over Tibet, the Chinese forcibly changed the Tibetan

economy by introducing collectivization during the Cultural Revolution. Then, once Mao died and was replaced as China's leader, the Chinese ended collectivization, and began a more liberal economic program. Surprisingly, even during periods of severe repression in other areas of Tibetan life, China never abandoned its liberal economic program in Tibet. In fact, this has grown steadily over the decades, and receives much of China's attention and resources to this day. Most interestingly, despite having a freer economy and the ability to improve their economic standing, Tibetans are now more economically dependent on the Chinese than ever before. China, it seems, believes the economic approach is the best way to win over the Tibetans for the short term, and is well on its way to achieving this goal.

However, for the long-term solution to China's absorption plan and the permanent eradication of the Tibetan problem it is necessary to look elsewhere, and so we now turn to the final component of the scheme: colonization. As mentioned before, colonization will no doubt take the longest time, but it is by far the most threatening of the measures taken by the Chinese from the Tibetan point of view. Although Tibetans and Chinese in Tibet do not yet mix in the countryside, in the cities the situation is quite different. Due to colonization, the Han are starting to outnumber Tibetans in cities such as Lhasa. Additionally, as Beijing continues to lift restrictions on resettlement, ethnic Chinese are allowed to flood into Tibet's cities where they take jobs away from Tibetans. Furthermore, the Chinese have been able to entrench themselves in occupations for which Tibetans are not yet qualified, and this poses an even greater danger to the Tibetan population. Finally, Tibetan women are encouraged to marry Chinese men, but Tibetan men are forbidden from marrying Chinese women. All these measures combined clearly point to a Chinese effort to breed the Tibetans out of Tibet and, if successful, the Chinese will permanently eliminate their Tibetan problem because there will no longer be any Tibetans *in* Tibet.

After examining China's four-pronged approach to consolidation, we then considered Tibetan resistance. As explained, in the sphere of internal resistance, Tibetans have remained fairly consistent. They stage demonstrations calling for the end of Chinese rule, are quickly rounded up by the police, and are subsequently imprisoned. To this point, resistance in Tibet has been unable to gain momentum.

As a consequence, however, there are those who have begun to argue for a change in strategy. For instance, the Tibetan lama, Samdhong Rinpoche, advocates adopting a strategy of mass nonviolent non-cooperation, and this idea has some merit. Unfortunately, the concept has not yet been adopted in Tibet, although there have been small examples of non-cooperation which could be precursors to something larger. At the other end of the resistance spectrum, meanwhile, there is also the possibility of violent means being adopted, given rumors of Tibetan independence groups, such as the Young Tigers. Finally, at the extreme end of the violence scale, there are those who fear a Tibetan terrorism campaign, but the likelihood of this approach being employed seems remote.

As far as external resistance measures are concerned, it is true that there have been some international efforts to help Tibetans, but the intensity of the campaign has ebbed and flowed over time. Most damaging for Tibetans is the fact that there has never been a concerted international effort to either make the Chinese leave Tibet, or grant Tibet true autonomy wherein Tibetans rule themselves while remaining a part of China (the “one country/two systems” approach). Additionally, the UN, never a strong supporter of the Tibetan cause, increasingly distances itself from the Tibetan issue.

Thus, with a recap of Tibet’s history from its earliest days to the present complete, we can now examine the reasons for failure of the Tibetan insurgency.

B. FAILURE ON MANY LEVELS

The Tibetan insurgency’s causes for failure can be divided into three: failures associated with the Tibetans themselves; failures by Tibet’s most strident supporter, the United States; and failures attributable to the rest of the international community. To begin with, Tibet’s underlying social structure—and its clan system in the rural areas—was not conducive to forming a national insurgent organization. In fact, every time Tibetans attempted to form a truly national organization they had internal problems because there was no overall sense of *being* Tibetan. Consequently, men tended to associate with others from their own clan or from the same region of Tibet. Naturally, this led to the formation of blocs within the greater resistance movement. Then, as a particular bloc assumed the leadership position, those groups not participating in the decision-making process felt discriminated against (whether this was the case or not).

Thus, despite several attempts to develop a truly national guerrilla organization, the long-standing suspicion with which the various clans viewed each other invariably led to insurmountable problems. And, in turn, these problems divided the Tibetans into an assortment of groups within a larger, but never coherent entity. In the end, then, what appeared on the surface to be a cohesive national resistance group was not, and without a united effort to pursue what was best for Tibet, the insurgency was bound to fail.

Another problem was the Tibetans' refusal to heed the advice of the CIA and their CIA-trained counterparts to fight like guerrillas. During the height of the Tibet-based phase of the insurgency, despite constant urging to adopt guerrilla tactics, the insurgents continued to congregate in large makeshift villages, and refused to abandon their families and animals. Unfortunately, the consequences of this chivalrous behavior were devastating for the Tibetans. Due to an utter lack of concealment, Chinese reconnaissance aircraft could easily spot the large formations of humans and animals on the ground. Then these aircraft relayed the group's position to strike aircraft and ground troops who quickly moved in to destroy the Tibetans. Thus, the Chinese military was able to systematically eliminate pockets of resistance, and annihilated thousands of Tibetan men, women, and children in the process. On the other hand, if the guerrillas had been willing to leave their families and herds behind, they would have been more mobile, and it would have been harder for the Chinese to find and destroy them. Then, perhaps, the Tibet-based phase of the insurgency would have lasted longer and caused greater damage to China.

However, I believe that even had they formed a truly united national guerrilla organization and adopted guerrilla tactics, the Tibetans could not have succeeded on their own. There were other forces at work to thwart Tibetans, and it is to these that we now turn by first examining U.S. failures.

One deficiency the United States easily could have remedied during the Tibet-based phase of the operation was the guerrillas' lack of modern communications. If only the U.S. had supplied insurgents with radios, guerrilla groups throughout Tibet could have let the CIA know when they needed resupply. But as the situation stood, only those groups that had CIA-trained guerrillas with them could contact the CIA for assistance. In

other words, unless the insurgents had already been contacted by the U.S., they had no way to establish contact. Additionally, since most guerrilla units did not possess radios, they lacked a rapid means of contacting each other if attacked by the Chinese, or if they wished to coordinate an operation against the Chinese.

Worst of all, though, is not that radios were not supplied thanks to a shortage. But, instead, the U.S. feared the Tibetans would not maintain communications security. Although it cannot be denied that communications security is a valid concern, it should not have been the overriding factor determining whether or not radios were widely distributed to the Tibetans. Even if security was compromised, the gain to Tibetans from having a rapid means of communication outweighed the risk of having the Chinese hear an occasional radio call. However, the United States unfortunately thought otherwise. Security *was* of paramount importance to the U.S., and the guerrillas subsequently suffered the consequences.

Another failure, this time applicable to the insurgency as a whole, was due to the nature of the U.S. government. Even if Tibetans had been provided easy access to radios, there were still other problems in getting aid to the guerrillas. The first is the fact that the United States government is a huge bureaucracy. Whenever an action regarding Tibet was considered, it first had to go through a series of approvals before it could be implemented. Needless to say, with so many individuals in the approval chain, there were bound to be problems. As demonstrated, it only took one influential decision-maker, such as Galbraith, to stymie the process altogether.

Also working against the Tibetans was the fact that the United States held presidential elections every four years. Therefore, Tibetans could potentially have had to work with a new administration every four years. Not only did this mean the Tibetans had to worry about working with different administrations, but it was never clear if the succeeding administration would even be willing to support the Tibetan cause. As evident from information gathered regarding the four administrations Tibetans dealt with, support was never guaranteed, and varied depending on each administration's foreign policy priorities.

Therefore, due to the nature of the U.S. democratic system, there was no way to ensure consistent long-term support for the Tibetans, and the only way to correct this failure would have been to provide maximum support once the decision to assist had been made. After all, if the United States was that concerned about the plight of Tibetans, it should have been willing to do all it could diplomatically, economically, and militarily to help them. Otherwise, the U.S. should not have bothered getting involved in the first place because once a priority has to be passed on to the next administration nothing is guaranteed. Even if there had been full support, however, by any one administration, there is still the possibility that the issue could not have been resolved over any single four-year period.

Having said this, though, the likelihood of victory would have been much greater in the early stages of the insurgency, while China was scrambling to develop Tibet's infrastructure. Consistent U.S. support at that time might have made the difference between rapid victory and eventual defeat. Therefore, although a lack of consistent support was a definite U.S. failure during the course of the Tibetan insurgency, this failure could only have been avoided during Eisenhower's time in office. Once power was transferred to the Kennedy administration, Eisenhower lost all control of operations in Tibet.

An additional U.S. failure associated with the overall insurgency was the absence of American personnel on the ground in Tibet. Without an American presence, it was extremely difficult to know exactly what was going on in Tibet at any given time. Even when CIA-trained Tibetans made their radio calls back to their controllers, they could only use their supplied codes at the most basic level, and sometimes trying to decipher what the Tibetans were saying was impossible. However, with U.S. personnel in Tibet, the present tactical situation would have been known at all times, and the Americans could have been used to make the radio calls back to the CIA. This step alone would have greatly reduced, if not totally eliminated, the problems associated with interpreting the incoming and outgoing radio messages, and would have solved the communications security problem. Also, with a greater command of the codes, U.S. personnel in Tibet could have reported valuable intelligence to the CIA that Tibetans were incapable of translating, given their truncated vocabulary.

Unfortunately, without a U.S. presence on the ground in Tibet, communications problems resulted in confusion both in Tibet and at the CIA and, more than likely, resulted in the loss or omission of valuable intelligence. Most assuredly, communications, often the weakest link in any operation, would have been vastly improved if Americans had been on the ground with the Tibetans, but due to the fact that U.S. personnel never stepped foot in Tibet during the insurgency, the overall resistance effort was negatively impacted.

A further benefit of having U.S. personnel on the ground is that they could have accompanied Tibetans on convoy raids in order to demonstrate the proper way to conduct such attacks. Additionally, the Americans could have taught the Tibetans how to maximize their limited resources during an attack. Then, as the Tibetans became proficient at waging guerrilla warfare, they could have been taught more advanced techniques, or left to conduct raids on their own. If left on their own, the U.S. personnel could then have been used, in conjunction with the Camp Hale trainees, to train those men at Mustang who had not yet received any guerrilla training. Thus, Tibetans could have learned the skills taught at Camp Hale without having to leave Tibet. This would have resulted in a shorter training period (no need to worry about transit time to and from the United States), and a much higher percentage of trained guerrillas. In the end, then, the Tibetan force would have been more highly trained and, I think, more effective.

A final U.S. failure proved most glaring during the Mustang phase of the insurgency. As previously explained, airdrop missions to the Tibetans were never plentiful, but at least they occurred on a somewhat regular basis during the Tibet-based phase of the insurgency. However, following the transition to Mustang and after the two initial airdrop missions were conducted in 1961, airdrop resupply was halted for four years. Now, deliberately withholding arms, ammunition, and supplies from a guerrilla force that the United States supposedly wanted to win seems a bizarre way to prosecute an insurgency, although it must be stressed that the Mustang force was not operating as the CIA originally envisioned. Nonetheless, cutting the Tibetans off from their U.S. lifeline was not going to coax them into following the CIA's plan since they freely admitted their refusal to set up a permanent guerrilla presence in Tibet was contingent on the entire force being armed. In hindsight, it seems the United States should have given

the insurgents the benefit of the doubt, and airdropped enough supplies to equip the entire Mustang force. Afterwards, if the Tibetans still refused to establish bases in Tibet, additional airdrop missions could have been cancelled.

By refusing to equip the whole of the Mustang organization, the U.S. set the stage for more problems. The Tibetans continued to refuse to establish camps in Tibet until they received adequate supplies, and the United States maintained that it would not provide the needed equipment until the Tibetans set up bases in Tibet. Neither side was willing to trust the other, and this impasse only served to slowly sap the strength of the insurgents and lessen the chances for Tibetan victory.

As a final comment on this subject, this failure is all the more aggravating because it could have been avoided if the U.S. had been willing to believe that the Tibetans would follow through on their promise. Instead, years passed as each side waited for the other to give in, and when the United States finally made a concession by conducting one last resupply mission in 1965, it was the classic case of too little too late. Clearly, another valuable opportunity had been squandered by the U.S.

The last area where failure doomed the Tibetan cause occurred in the international arena. For example, at the UN, the fact that Tibet's former staunch supporters, the British, essentially ended their involvement in the region once they granted India independence deprived Tibet of an ally when one was needed most. Additionally, Great Britain expected India to assume the role as Tibet's supporter, but that did not happen because Nehru was doing his utmost not to offend China. Furthermore, the U.S. chose not to sponsor the Tibetan cause for fear that such action would be construed as an expansion of the Cold War. Thus, Tibet was forced to rely on small nations to champion its cause, but even here support was sporadic. Many nations were either indifferent towards the Tibetan issue, felt Tibet had no justifiable position according to international law (after signing the 17-Point Agreement), or feared upsetting China. Yet, regardless of the specific cause for each country's opposition, the fact remains that these factors combined to prevent the issue of Tibetan independence from being aired, and restricted the few resolutions that did pass to dealing strictly with human rights abuses.

However, even those resolutions that did pass lacked substance, and went so far as to omit the name of the party responsible for committing the human rights abuses against the Tibetans, namely China. The only thing the resolutions accomplished was to convince the international community that it had done something to voice its displeasure with China. The disturbing truth is that the fractured UN was too weak to generate pressure that could force China to remove its troops from Tibet. Thus, the world essentially stood on the sidelines as China brutally imposed its will upon Tibet.

Another international failure during the Tibetan insurgency can be attributed to India in the aftermath of the 1962 Border War. At the war's end, India formed the predominantly Tibetan Special Frontier Force which was originally designed to help wage the Tibetan insurgency. However, it was never employed in that role. Instead, India used the SFF as its border guard against an anticipated Chinese invasion, and this restricted SFF role proved particularly damaging to the Tibetan cause for several reasons. First, the SFF received excellent training from both India and the United States, and was well equipped. Consequently, as it became a formidable force that could have significantly increased the fighting power within the Tibetan insurgency, the SFF consumed valuable resources that otherwise could have been supplied to the men at Mustang. Then, recruits that the Mustang force desperately needed, to replace its losses, were diverted to the SFF. Next, as if losing recruits to the SFF was not damaging enough to the men at Mustang, their ranks were further depleted when some of their own men were selected for training with the SFF. Once training with the SFF was complete, the guerrillas were not returned to Mustang as would be expected, but were incorporated into the SFF. Thus, even though the Mustang commander knew that his men would be more valuable if they underwent formal guerrilla training, he knew that as soon as he released them for training with the SFF he would never see them again, and he strictly limited the number of men he would release for training. Therefore, as a result of all these factors, the quality of the Mustang force never had a chance to improve, and the guerrillas entered a decline from which they never recovered.

With the examination of the failures contributing to the defeat of the Tibetan insurgents complete, it is time to look at the other half of the equation. We now turn our

attention to the actions the Chinese took which, in conjunction with the aforementioned failures, helped guarantee China's success in defeating the insurgency.

C. HOW CHINA WON

Probably the most significant factor helping China achieve victory against the Tibetan insurgents was its immediate realization that infrastructure in Tibet was desperately needed. As we saw, before the Chinese started cracking down on Tibetan freedoms, they made sure they had a way to control the population. The first few roads built in Tibet guaranteed that once China increased the pressure against the Tibetans it had a way to rush troops from China to Tibet if, and when, resistance formed. Clearly, if the Chinese had instituted "democratic reforms" before roads were built, they would have been greatly hindered in their efforts because it would have taken weeks instead of days to transport soldiers to trouble spots within Tibet. Yet, even with the measures of control the roads offered, China recognized that more was needed, and began a program to build airfields in Tibet. With completion of the first airfield, for instance, the Chinese became able to transport troops from China to Tibet even more quickly, although in smaller numbers, than was possible with truck convoys alone.

In addition to shortening the amount of time needed to transport PLA soldiers to a trouble spot, the airfields provided the Chinese with two more capabilities. First, reconnaissance aircraft based at these new airfields were able, from their unobstructed vantage point high above the ground, to quickly cover Tibetan territory, and could easily spot resistance groups. Second, co-located at the airfield, or based at a nearby airfield, were strike aircraft that could then bomb the Tibetan insurgents. Thus, strike aircraft, for the first time, made immediate engagement possible because the Chinese no longer had to wait for PLA ground troops to reach the area.

However, it is necessary to note that this handoff from the reconnaissance aircraft to the strike aircraft and then to the ground troops would have been impossible if not for another advantage China possessed. Unlike the Tibetans, the Chinese military had an excellent modern communications system that it used fully in its pursuit of the Tibetan guerrilla groups. As a result, messages were quickly passed to en-route forces when Tibetans attempted to flee their pursuers. In other words, once spotted, Tibetans had little

chance of escaping the all-seeing eyes of the aerial observer, especially when he was armed with a radio.

Another key to achieving victory in any counterinsurgency is to separate the guerrillas from the population, and here, too, China was extremely successful. During the Tibet-based phase of the insurgency, the guerrillas attempted to procure supplies from the local population, but due to two Chinese measures the Tibetans were mostly unsuccessful. China decreed that anyone found supporting the insurgents would be imprisoned, and in case this was not disincentive enough, made sure Tibetans had nothing to give to the freedom fighters. Remember, the Chinese had already initiated the seizure of all Tibetan private property and crops, and only left the Tibetan people with a little food to feed themselves. As a result, Tibetans had barely enough to keep themselves alive, never mind to try to support a band of guerrillas. Therefore, through these measures, China was able to successfully remove the Tibetan population as a source of support, and forced the insurgents to fend for themselves.

Then, upon relocation to Mustang, the guerrillas found that they were even more isolated from the Tibetan population. On forays into Tibet, insurgents were unable to get help from the locals and, in several instances, were betrayed to the Chinese authorities and arrested. For the guerrillas, Tibet had become a hostile environment where no one could be trusted. Thus, progressively, the insurgents were restricted to a small operating space (directly across the border from Mustang), and this allowed the Chinese to concentrate their efforts in one small area instead of having to patrol throughout Tibet. Then, as the pressure intensified in this small region of Tibet, China continually shrank the operating space until it was completely eliminated, and the insurgents no longer attempted to venture outside of Mustang.

The final factor that led to success in China's counterinsurgency was persistence. Amazingly, China waged its battle against the Tibetan guerrillas for nearly twenty years and, although it could have chosen to abandon its campaign against the remnants of the insurgency at several points, it never did. China chose to pursue the guerrillas until they were utterly destroyed as an organization, and it is safe to assume China would have been willing to continue the counterinsurgency regardless of how long it took to achieve total

victory. The Chinese understood that unless the guerrillas were completely eradicated as a threat to Chinese rule in Tibet they would continue to act as a thorn in China's side. Without doubt, the Chinese exercised dogged persistence and, frankly, this is what is required to eradicate an insurgency. If not thoroughly committed, there is a good chance the counterinsurgency will fail because guerrillas have unlimited time to wait out their opponent.

Now that we have examined how China was able to defeat the Tibetan insurgents and the steps it took to ensure that previous Tibetan opportunities were constrained, there is only one conclusion that can be reached. China has taken the necessary steps, with regard to Tibet's infrastructure, economy, and religion, to bind Tibetans more closely to China than ever before. Then, when one adds the final factor—colonization—it becomes clear that the Chinese are not only binding Tibet closer to China, but are also well on their way to eradicating Tibetans as a distinct race. As conditions presently stand, a successful insurgency is nearly impossible. However, the situation is not utterly hopeless as long as independence-minded Tibetans still physically exist in Tibet. Therefore, the final phase of the investigation shall propose conditions necessary for a successful insurgency in Tibet that one can look for, or put in motion, before colonization slams shut this existing window of opportunity.

D. SCENARIOS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCY

It appears that there are two scenarios that could generate a successful insurgency. According to Mr. Joseph Babb, a China expert at Ft Leavenworth, KS, the two possibilities would occur as follows: the first (which I will call the internal scenario) would be dependent upon a radical change within China, and the second (which will be referred to as the external scenario) would require active outside participation (J. Babb, personal communication, April 21, 2003).

Conditions conducive to an insurgency, according to the internal scenario, would result after a breakdown in Beijing's ability to enforce its rule. As one author puts it, "China's leaders clearly fear that if domestic uprisings are not repressed, their very failure to act quickly will validate claims that the government had lost its political legitimacy" (Elleman, 2001, p. 309). For instance, if one area in China was to rebel against Beijing's authority and it was not immediately crushed by the Chinese, Tibetans

might view this as a sign of weakness in Beijing's ability to enforce its will, and decide to launch their own insurgency while Beijing was exhibiting this vulnerability. Also, if the first region to rebel was on China's periphery, and Beijing proved incapable of controlling its border territories, it is conceivable that China would momentarily abandon outlying regions in order to maintain the integrity of its core. Certainly, if Beijing demonstrated concern for maintaining control over interior China at the exclusion of everywhere else, Tibetans would perceive this as a golden opportunity to end the era of Chinese rule.

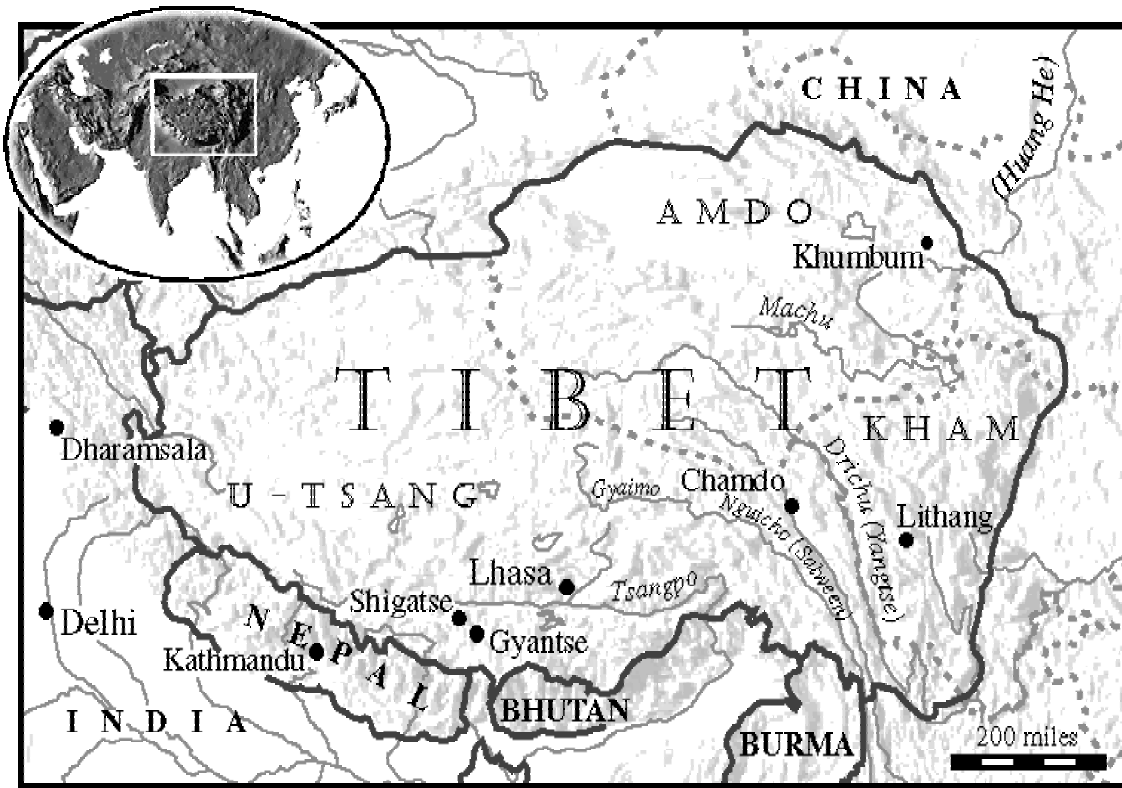
Likewise, the external scenario preys upon another of China's fears. Many Chinese strategists are "concerned about separatists in Tibet and western China, who may receive terrorist or military support from China's enemies" (Pillsbury, 2000, p. 276). To precipitate this, the U.S. would first have to shift its attitude towards Tibet. The United States would need to signal its support of Tibetan independence in addition to human rights concerns. Then, after this initial step was taken, the U.S. would be wise to approach India's leadership to discuss an alliance to wage another Tibetan insurgency. By pursuing this approach, the United States could enlist the help of a country still smarting over its humiliating defeat at the hands of the Chinese in the Border War of 1962, and that would probably like nothing better than to exact some revenge for its loss. Additionally, the Special Frontier Force could be used to spearhead an attack against China. This move would be especially beneficial because it would have the added morale builder inherent in providing Tibetan members of the SFF with the long-awaited opportunity to put their skills to use fighting for Tibetan independence (as was the original intent of the SFF).

Although these steps would represent a start, they alone would not be sufficient to attain Tibetan victory. As a minimum, the U.S. and India would have to provide the SFF and Tibetan guerrillas in Tibet with needed supplies, and it would be advantageous if the United States could provide the Tibetans with CIA and/or U.S. military advisors to help prosecute the insurgency. Of course, even were all the above measures to be taken, there is still one more factor that is crucial to consider in contemplating the external scenario: commitment. A firm commitment from both the United States and India would be required if the external scenario were to have any hope of succeeding. If, however, such

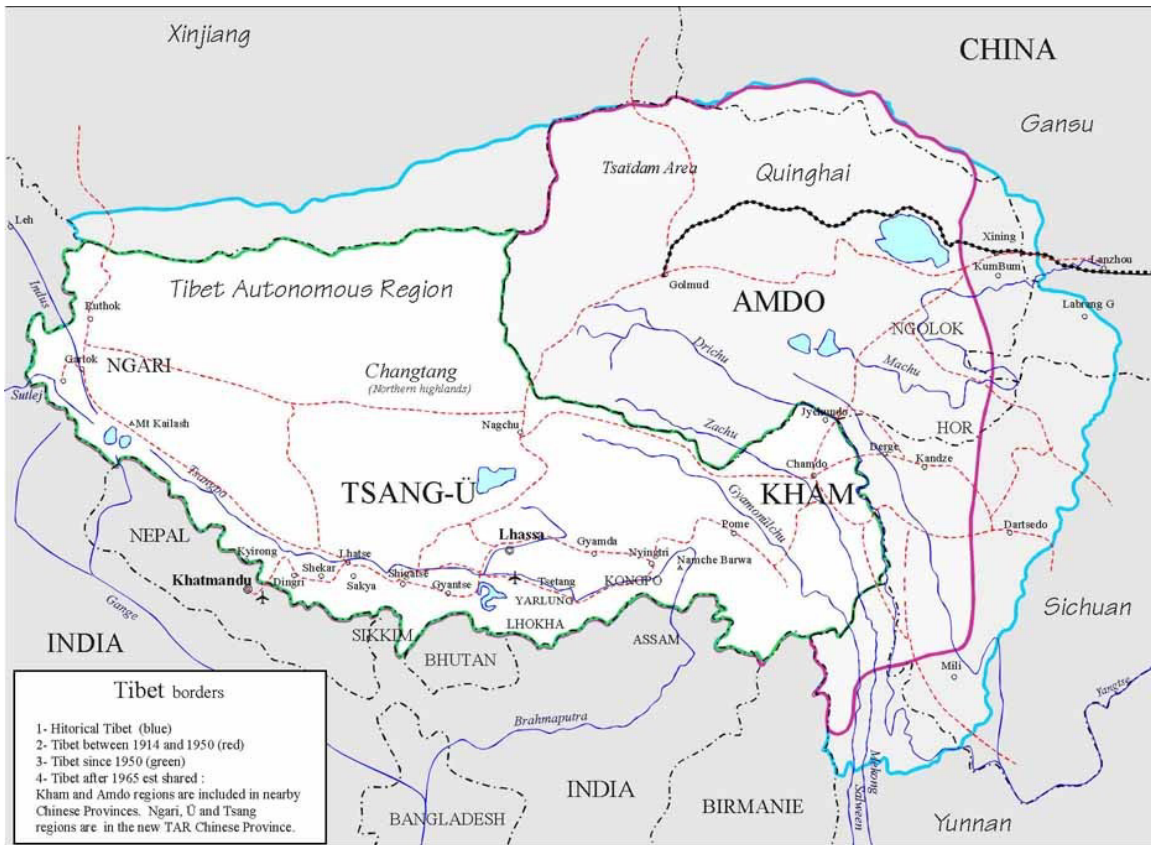
a commitment is not forthcoming from either partner, an insurgency should not be attempted because it is destined to fail.

In sum, then, it is apparent that the potential still exists for a future Tibetan insurgency if conditions are correct. Obviously, if given a choice as to which path to follow, the internal scenario would work best for the United States since it involves the least risk. But if the U.S. grows weary of waiting for an internal Chinese breakdown, there is always the external scenario to consider. However, it cannot be overemphasized that the external scenario should not be attempted unless all parties to it are fully dedicated to securing Tibetan independence because anything short of total commitment is bound to have the same result as the twenty-year effort the Tibetans valiantly, but in the end, vainly waged against the Communist Chinese.

APPENDIX. MAPS



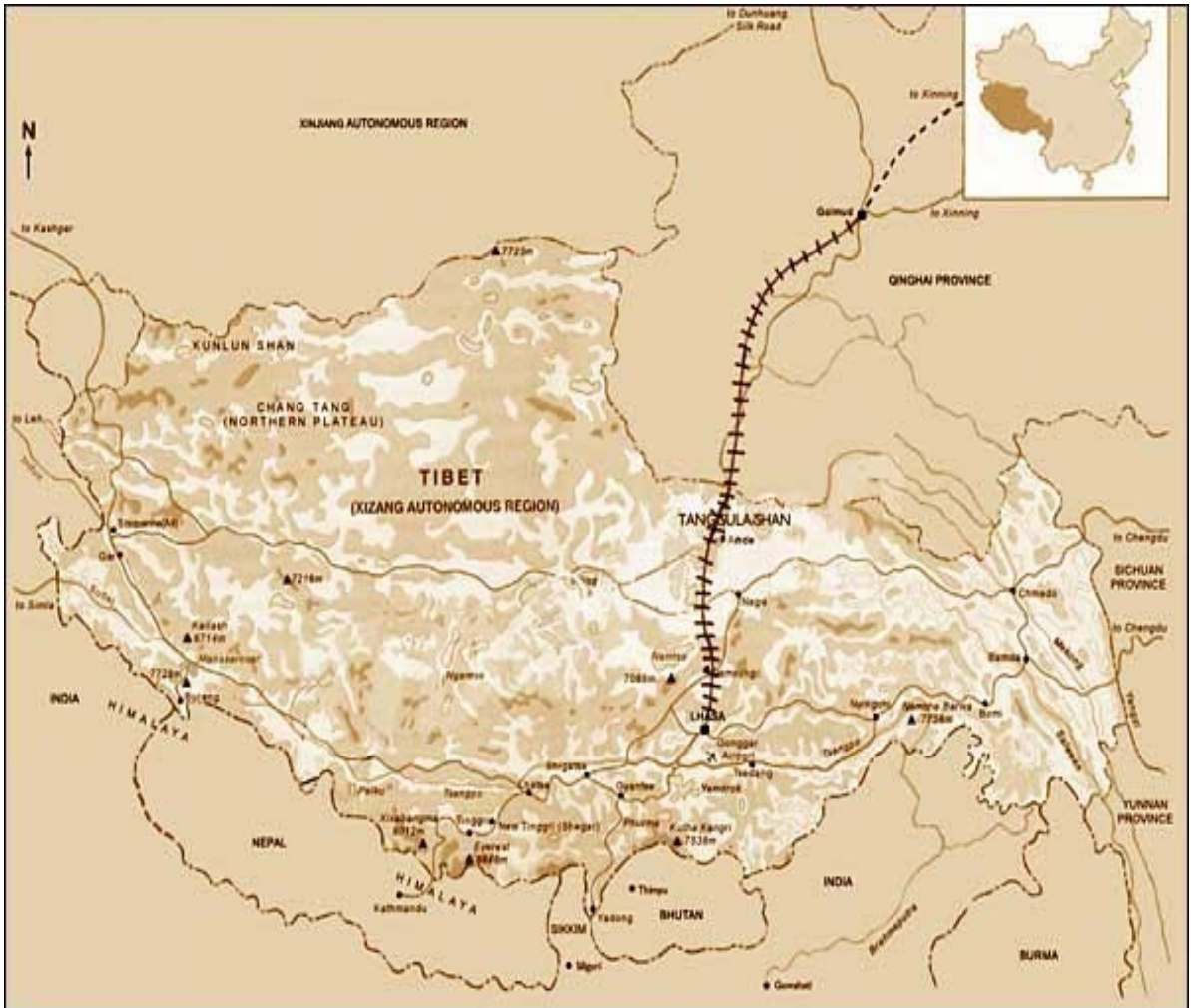
Map 1. Tibet's Location in the World. (From: <http://www.hybriddesigns.com>)



Map 2. Regions of Tibet. (From: <http://www.tibetmap.org>)



Map 3. Nepal. (From: <http://go.hrw.com>)



Map 4. Roads and Proposed Railroad. (From: <http://www.himalmag.com>)

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